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ISSUE 24 APRIL 1990
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ST ACTION COVER DISK 4

FREE GAME - PAGE 86

**30 PAGES OF GAME REVIEWS: E-MOTION • OP THUNDERBOLT
PIPEMANIA • BLACK TIGER • PLAYER MANAGER • RAINBOW ISLANDS**

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action sequences put you in control of Elliot Ness's elite squad of crime-busters.

ALLEYWAY SHOOTOUTS, THE BORDER RAID,

The Railway Station confrontation and Warehouse bust culminating in the thrilling denouement of a

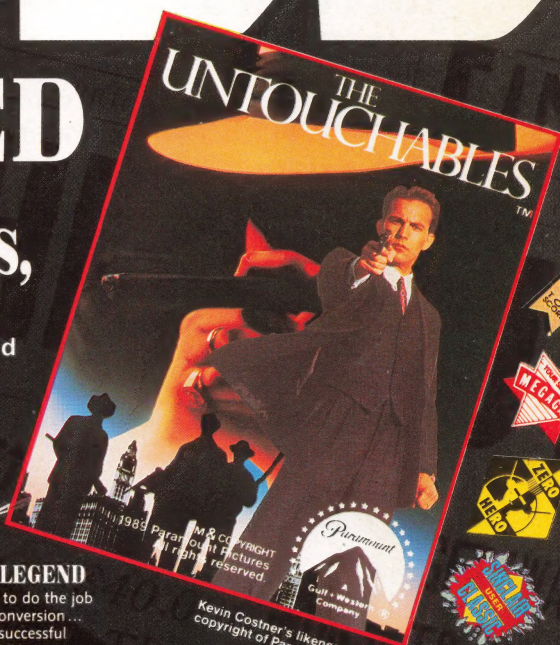
ROOFTOP DUEL

as you re-live the knife edge existence of Ness in his struggle against the retribution of Capone!

THE UNTOUCHABLES - LIVE AN AMERICAN LEGEND

"an absolute corker of a game... as smooth and polished as you can get, animation is top notch... a brilliant film conversion" Games Machine

"a fine example of how to do the job properly... a cracking conversion... easily one of the most successful licences to date" Sinclair User



Kevin Costner's likeness is the copyright of Paramount Pictures.

BLOCKBUSTER FOLLOW-UP TO LAST CHRISTMAS'S No. 1 HIT... OPERATION WOLF...

NOW WITH TWICE THE ACTION, TWICE THE FUN, TWICE THE CHALLENGE ROY ADAM IS BACK!

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Operation Thunderbolt the incredible Taito coin-op conversion brought NOW to your home computer.



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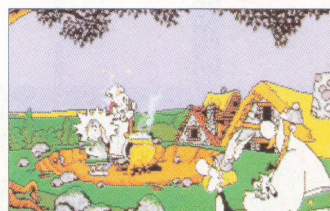
ACTION PACKED

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ACTION COVER DISK PAGE 21

This month's cover disk certainly is action packed. Side one, alone, features three, fully playable demos of forthcoming releases. We take a look at Psygnosis' mega blast'em-up, It can't be done, glimpse at Logotron's platform extravaganza, Kid Gloves and venture deep into Chaos' dungeon with Softex's editor. Meanwhile, side two features Ocean's newie, The Lost Patrol.

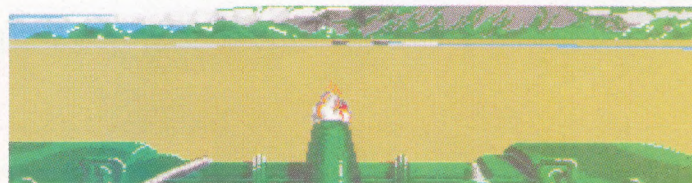


ASTERIX PAGE 44

Yep, it's that loveable Gaul. Together with his fat friend, Obelix, our hero attempts to find a cure for the village druid, Getafix.

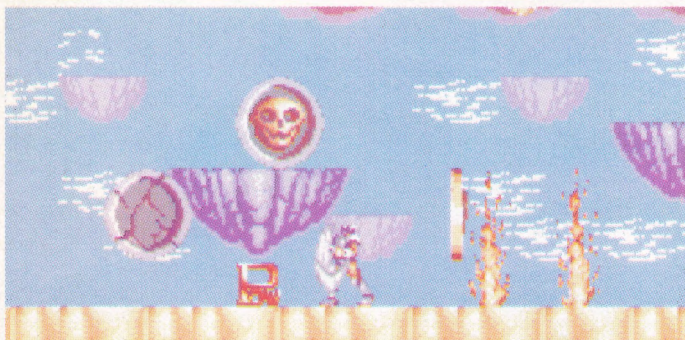
WIN!

Oodles of goodies must go. We've a multiplay midi system a camcorder and £1500 of top software.



SHERMAN M4 PAGE 74

Prepare to make tracks with this great tank simulation. Set within three different war-zones, can you take on the might of the German army and win?

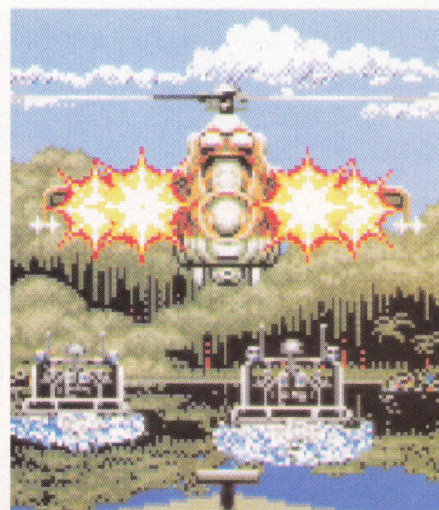


BLACK TIGER PAGE 46

Your world has been torn apart by three fire-breathing dragons and their demonic minions. Then, just as all hope was lost, came Black Tiger. U.S. Gold's conversion of the Capcom coin-op is finally here. We check it out.

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT PAGE 38

Here's a hostage situation that requires more than slow diplomatic talks. Grab your Uzi and let 'em have it.

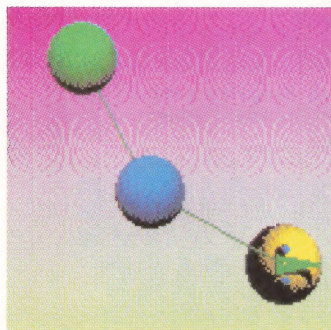


ACTION PACKED FEATURES!

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E-MOTION PAGE 62

Elastic bands and balls, doesn't add up to an amazingly addictive game does it? Wrong, E-Motion is brilliant!



CLOWN 'O' MANIA PAGE 76

Yes, now's your chance to assume the role of Beppo the clown as you race your way around the ladder laden platforms.

Division Tables							
Division 1	Division 2	Division 3	Division 4				
CLUB	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
WIGAN	9	7	1	1	9	3	22
CARDIFF	9	5	3	1	12	3	18
SHREWSBURY	9	5	2	2	8	2	17
ROTHERHAM	9	5	1	3	8	5	16
ST ACTION	9	3	6	0	6	1	15
HUDDERSFIELD	9	4	2	3	12	8	14
FULHAM	9	3	2	4	4	5	11
NORTHAMPTON	9	2	3	4	11	9	9
READING	9	2	3	4	6	8	9
PRESTON	9	2	2	5	4	9	8
BRISTOL	9	2	1	6	2	16	7
BIRMINGHAM	9	1	0	8	6	18	3

PLAYER MANAGER PAGE 82

Kick Off has to be the finest football game of all time, until now, that is. Anco, present a management game with a difference, you actually control the players! 'Ere we go, 'ere we..

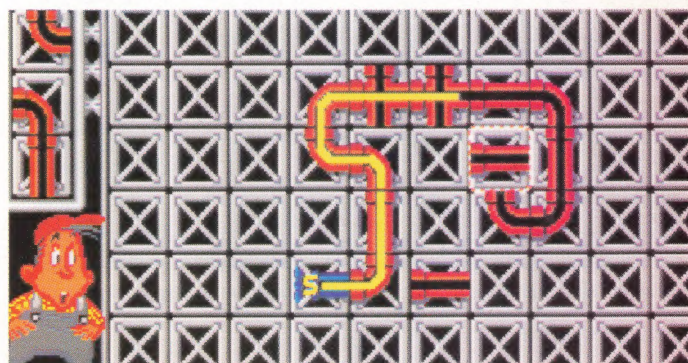
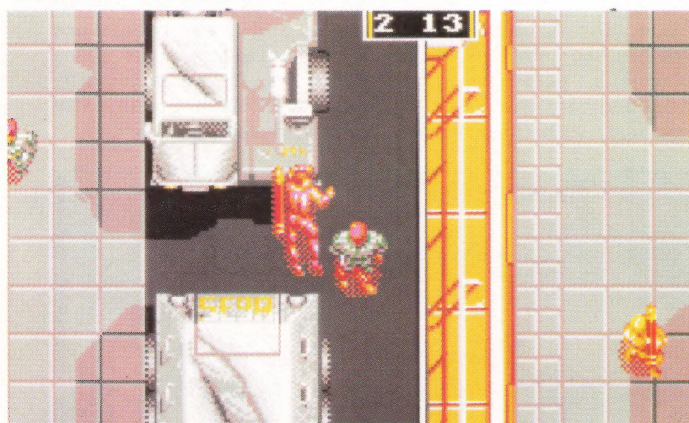


RISK PAGE 36

Global conflict in the shape of Leisure Genius's ace licence, Risk.

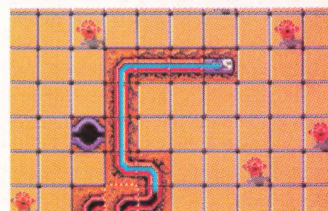
CRACKDOWN PAGE 34

Something's going on down in the city. The criminal underworld, lead by the evil Dr.K, is taking over the city. Assuming the role of FBI agents Ben Breaker and Andy Attacker you, and a friend, must put a stop to crimewave.



PIPEMANIA PAGE 66

Hot on the heels of last issue's coverdisk demo, the top scoring game this month just had to be Empire's incredibly addictive, not to mention frustrating, Pipemania. Leaving their computers behind, the STA team become manic plumbers for the day. Together with the Acme pipe co. the team tried in vain to stop the flooz.

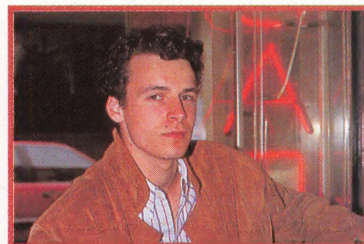


Published by: Interactive Publishing Ltd, Latham House, Quarry Lane, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 2NY. Tel (0243) 532828. Fax (0243) 533070. Publisher: Hugh Gollner The Team: Nick Clarkson, Jeff Minter, Andy Mitchell, Jason Spiller, Stephen White. Artwork Production: Chris Stevens. Digital repro: Jane Gollner Electronic art consultant: Ian Tindale. Cover Art: Artistix Tel (0705) 252125. Advertising: Jean Gollner Tel: (0243) 531374 Fax: (0243) 533070. Subscriptions: Database Direct. Tel 051-357 1275. Fax: 051-357 2813. Printed in England. Please Note: No material from this publication may be reproduced in any way without the publishers written consent. Correspondence: all enquiries or requests for information must be made by letter; we are unable to deal with such requests by phone. Legal bit: Whilst every care is taken, the publishers cannot be held responsible for errors contained within this magazine.

ACTION NEWS

KINGSLEY: WHAT'S THE SECRET?

As Jason Kingsley and team put the finishing touches to the dark and mysterious Blade Warrior, ST Action heard through the grape vine that Squire Kingsley was working on a project for U.S. Gold, but because they are planning a mega launch for what is expected to be a very unusual and innovative game, everyone concerned is keeping tight-lipped about it. Can we expect the striking silhouette graphics from Blade Warrior? 'No comment' they replied in unison. Still, we thought we'd print this picture of Jason for his Mum. 'Okay Mrs Kingsley?



Jason Kingsley keeping Mum about his latest project for U.S. Gold.

Well we've made it! We're two years old this month and not a wrinkle or grey hair in sight - a few worry lines though! If you're a regular reader of ST Action, you will have come to expect a full colour magazine which is packed to capacity with clear, concise reviews and unbiased comments as well as thoughtful screenshots. Not only do we check out all the latest releases for the ST, there are special features such as profiles and interviews, super compos and, not forgetting the unbeatable ST Action front cover disk which is proving to be very popular. Not only have we got our digit permanently on the pulse with the latest news our advice and information, features such as Giving the Game Away and Dungeon's and Disk Drives have gained an incredible following. We intend to maintain this quality for the next two years and hope that you will continue to read ST Action.



Frontline, as it's name suggests, sees the war from the eyes of a squad level officer in the thick of the action, as opposed to the corpulent General, safe in the war room.

ON THE FRONTLINE

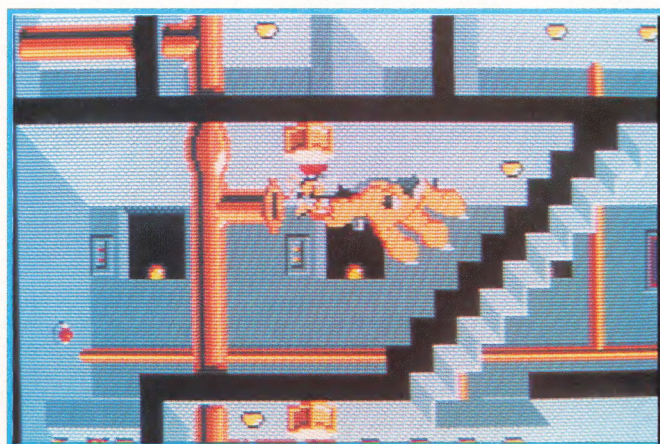
Frontline is a World war II, strategy wargame which, for a change, is set at squad level rather than looking down from the dizzy heights of Field Marshal or General. Pitched at war strategy fans, you're right in the thick of the action rather than in the war room warming a glass of brandy. You're holding the objective set by your superiors and the battle situations can range from frontal assault to rear guard action. Infantry units represent squads of 10 men and their support weapons, artillery units

represent single pieces and their crews. Frontline is designed to show the battle from, as the title suggests, from the frontline as opposed to the war room, although gameplay is traditional war strategy-style gameplay. There are four scenarios which adhere to actual historic W.W. II battles including Casino and Pegasus Bridge. This soldier-level strategy is set to change the stuffy elitist image attached to war simulations. Frontline is due for release this month, priced at £24.95.

INFOGRAMES ANNOUNCE ARCADE GAME RELEASE

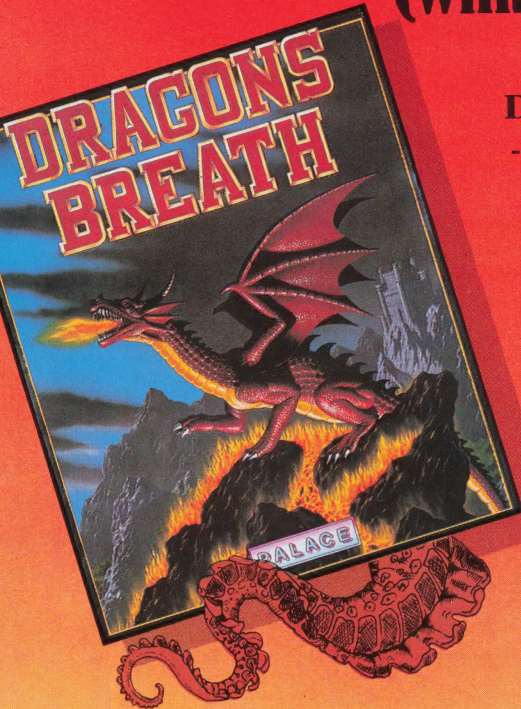
The Toyottes, not to be confused with the Japanese car manufacturer, are a race of purple rats which are feeding on what remains of the world after the Apocalypse, and these scavengers live in the sewers and underground. The Toyottes are the rather unpleasant enemy in Infogrames' game of the same name which is based on the cartoon series by Raoul Cauvin and Louis Michel Carpentier, the game is set in a 3D labyrinth - games based on comics and cartoons seems to be popular with the French.

Stir Crazy proved what could be achieved on the ST some two years ago and more recently, North and South combined Cartoon - quality graphics with incredible gameplay. The Toyottes, however, is more traditional game graphics purports to be 'an arcade game with a difference'. The screen is constructed from several rooms which are in an impressive 3D scape and these rooms are joined by ladders, stairs, pipes and doors. The game could be described as a graphically advanced platform-style game.



Toyottes: A graphically advanced platform game which, although set in a 3D playfield, clings to the traditional arcade gameplay.

A TALE OF DRAGONS, CRUGHONS AND SPRITE CONSTRUCTION (with very good reviews)



DRAGONS BREATH

- THE FANTASY STRATEGY GAME OF 1990

"You feel that you are creating magic" 89% **THE ONE**

"Graphics are excellent, and the stereo sound effects are superb... go for it." 89% **C&VG (C & VG HIT)**

"Pretty tasty.. great feel and depth." 92% **CU (Screenstar)**

ST/AMIGA R.R.P. £29.99

PALACE

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"Plenty of fun.. highly recommended." 84% **THE ONE**

"If you've ever wished you could create your own games, this is a dream come true". 92% **ZZAP! (GOLD MEDAL)**

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"An enjoyable, well presented product with a lot of depth. I whole-heartedly recommend it" **ACE RATED 910**

"Brilliant." 90% **ZERO**

"Set to become a timeless classic" 90% **THE ONE**

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PALACE SOFTWARE - ART FOR GAMES' SAKE

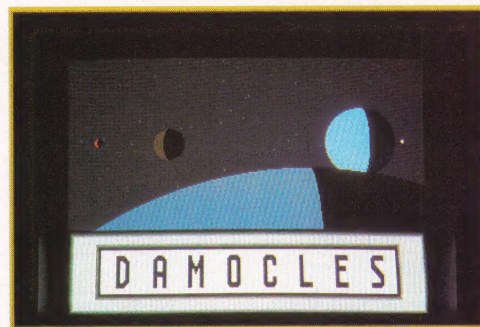
PALACE

TO BE OR NOT TO BE?

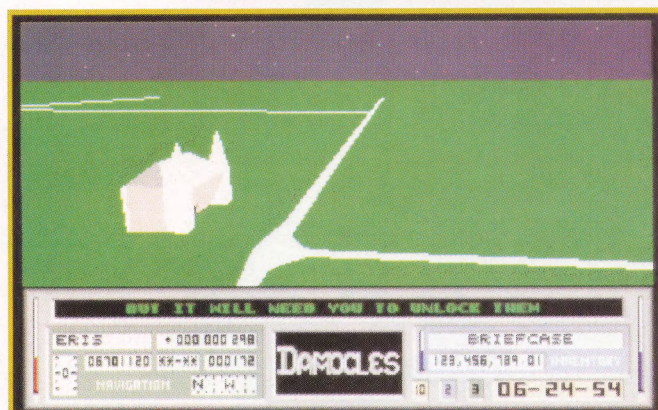
The sword of Damocles hangs ominously over the head of Paul Woakes and the Novagen team once again as they announce yet another release date. Over the past two years of development, numerous deadlines for the release of Damocles have been broken. But MD Bruce is optimistic that finally, this epic is expected in April. Jordan candidly admitted to STA that the project had taken far too long, but added: 'Novagen's success and the longevity of the

popularity of our games, is due to great attention to detail. Damocles is a massive game, the nature of which requires meticulous inspection and testing. We are currently play-testing the game, and it's only now that we realise how big it really is. After the amount of time it has taken, it would be pointless to skimp on anything, and we're not being pressured into that position.' In the mean time, Jordan once again sets the release date at the infamous four to five weeks.

First previewed in issue one of ST Action, Damocles has taken over two years to produce. But the team are still adamant that they are not going to be rushed.



Damocles is the subject of much scrutiny by the Novagen team at the moment this shot is from a demo of the game which is eighteen months old



Novagen are lost in the limitless parameters of space trying to de-bug Damocles.

BUSY YEAR

After a tentative and uncertain period last year, Logotron have found their feet and are striding through a pretty hectic release schedule. News is that the Logotron label, which used to be better known for its educational software, is going to be changed to Millenium. The team is cultivating a reputation in the industry for their originality and diversity, as well as their stand against unnecessary violence. After the strange and somewhat off-the-wall game, Archipelagos, a brave release in a shoot'em-up dominated market, the current projects and forthcoming releases make up a pretty impressive list. The 3D vector-graphic aircraft simulation, Thunderstrike by 3D expert, Brian Pollack, is due to be released soon. Meanwhile, the impressive bounty hunter game Resolution 101 is making great progress. But what about future projects? I asked project chief, Tony Beckwith: 'The schedule is hectic over the next year. Steve Bak is working on a follow-up to Bad Company which will use the same routines, although the game itself is different. He's also working on linking two computers so that you can compete against each other.' Bak is particularly busy at the



Resolution 101 - seek and destroy! The scrolling effect is incredibly quick and smooth in this 3D scape.

moment as he's working on a sixteen-bit version of the popular eight-bit game Hercules - certainly not a looker, but a very playable game.

Meanwhile, the Astral team, responsible for Logotron's Archipelagos, have a new member in their ranks, Stuart Greg, who did Rick Dangerous; Tony continued: 'He's working on a sequel to Rick Dangerous, called Haunted House, which will be greatly improved, with a greater number of direction possibilities, enhanced graphics and even more surprises.' Also, Logotron are taking to the car-racing circuit a game that they reckon will leave the others standing. 'Teque, who did



Fully light source shaded graphics puts Thunderstrike on the leading edge of vector-graphic design.

Continental Circuits and Chase racing game, which we're pitching for next Christmas.

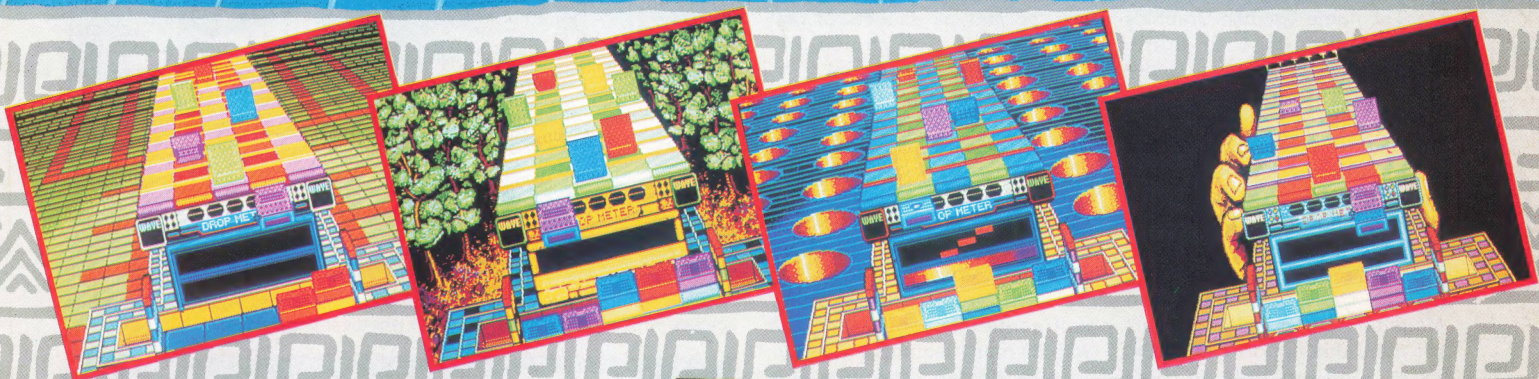
**THIS IS THE 90's
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DOMARK

NEWS EXTRA...SPECIAL REPORT GREMLIN

Since the much-publicized split from Centersoft/US Gold, the Gremlin team have forged their own identity and with it a reputation for quality. But as Jason Spiller discovered, the best is yet to come!

The name Gremlin Graphics is synonymous with home computer entertainment. Under the Centersoft umbrella, Gremlin was a high profile and much-publicized label whose stand commanded the largest area of floor space and the prettiest showgirls at computer shows. But the team yearned to be more independent and pursue their own ideas and Managing Director Ian Stewart provided this opportunity. Now, as a smaller but no less prominent label, they have that much-needed independence and identity, and this certainly reflects in the games which are currently in development. Rarely have I seen such variety under one roof, as the release schedule for 1990 shows. A fine combination of leading-edge design, realistic sport simulation and traditional arcade fun which'll have games players of advancing years reminiscing - but more of that later.

Ultimate Golf re-reviewed

STA reviewed Ultimate Golf in the January edition. But to ensure that the game lived up to its title, Gremlin delayed the release of the game, and the golf/sim was the subject of much scrutiny. I can report that

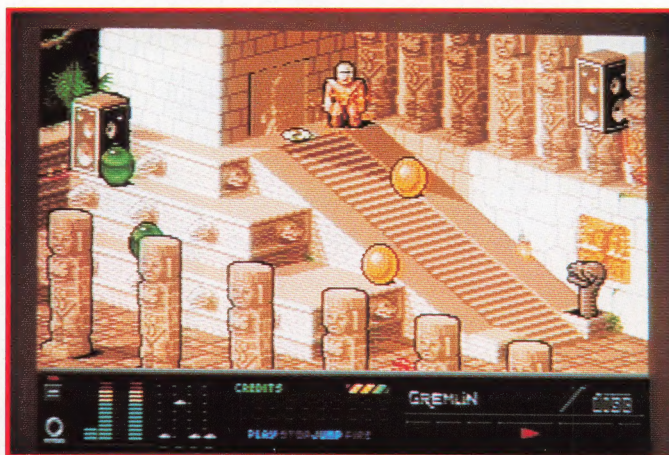
the final version of the game, which is due for imminent release, is certainly worthy of its title. What's most appealing about the game is that it can be played at two levels; you've got the detailed simulation which incorporates all aspects of real golf such as club choice and weather conditions or, alternatively, 'Caddy' option makes the selections for you, allowing you to just get on and thrash around the course without delay. There is a selection of actual famous golf courses as well as Gremlin's designer fairways. Accolade's Leaderboard was the leading golf game for many years, but with its many features and easy-to-play design, Ultimate Golf takes golf simulation into the 90s - an albatross of a game!

Ramrod - completion imminent

One of the first game projects I covered in issue one of ST Action was Gremlin's arcade epic, Ramrod. Two years on and the graphics and gameplay look as strong and up-to-date as ever. Now the team promises an imminent release of this stunning game which consists of a quite unique and original adventure and loads of arcade sub-games. Choosing either the main character Ramrod or his droid Rambot, the objective of the game is to keep them occupied, happy and entertained. This is achieved by manoeuvring him around a 3D world, avoiding numerous weird



Guiding Ramrod around various hazardous terrains, you must keep him amused with arcade games, music or whatever is available.



Ramrod has taken over two years to produce but as you can see, the graphics and game idea is as fresh as ever.

obstacles and enemies, in search of arcade entertainment. In each of the truly stunning screens, there are various arcade machines which must

move Ramrod in front of the VDU. Suddenly he disappears inside the machine and a tough arcade game ensues with you at the controls. These sub games range from advanced space Invaders to Pinball and each is as absorbing as the next, keeping both Ramrod and yourself thoroughly entertained. An April release date is expected.

Monty returns!

Game fans of advancing years (anyone over eighteen that is) might recall an arcade hero who starred in a series of monster smash games. I'm of course referring to Gremlin's darling of the little screen, Monty Mole. Now Monty makes a stunning return to the screen and shows no visible signs of ageing. Our Mole hero may not have changed but his 2D platform environment certainly has. In a platform extravaganza which give the likes of Rick Dangerous a run for its money, Monty turns superhero and complete with Superman cape, he sets out on his quest to, well, get from one



The great White Shark unwinds for another classic drive. Now you have the choice of fussing around with the numerous game features or just get on and thrash about the course.

GRAPHICS STEAMIN' INTO THE 1990s

This is one mole that doesn't mess about! Here our mole takes on his enemy with bazooka perched on shoulder.



level to another. State-of-the-art platform hazards abound in Monty's world plus numerous original obstacles which'll have you wrenching your joystick from its base. Monty also has a cache of weaponry at his disposal that would make Rambo green with envy, including a shoulder-held bazooka which he uses to great effect. This arcade classic makes its sixteen-bit debut in the Spring.

'Venus, thy beauty is blinding!'

Graphically stunning, Venus is on the leading edge of arcade action, with fist-size sprites moving fast and smooth. You control a fly with advanced intelligence across a planet whose ecological balance has been thrown into chaos. As the fly progresses through the game, you're attacked by insects of such size and grotesqueness that they wouldn't just land on your dinner, they would pick it up. One of the most stunning effects is a reversal of gravity which puts the fly upside down, thus reversing joystick direction. But not only is Venus a graphical colossus, the gameplay is



State-of-the-art, leading edge graphics makes Venus stunningly attractive. What's even better, it's not just a looker it's a player.



Monty Mole's return marks a turning point in arcade history, perhaps other companies will follow suit and up-date some of the old classics - great fun!

equally prominent as Gremlin have combined traditional arcade features with the latest techniques. Venus is a multi-world consisting of five massive levels - a graphical stunner with mindblowin' action!

Federation Quest One

The huge biological survey ship, Jane Seymour, (funny I never thought of her as that), has left Earth on a mission to penetrate deep into the Orion arm of the galaxy. But a defective light-speed jump has immersed the

vessel in deadly radiation killing most of the crew and driving the survivors insane. The federation have appointed you to travel to and investigate the stricken vessel. Your objective is to enter the ship, repair the damaged system, to avoid and eliminate the mutant crew, and pilot the hulk back to Earth. The game is played from first-person perspective and the gameplay combines elements of strategy real-time action and role-playing. The game is a taxing trail of puzzles and discovery. Add to this fully animated

The space ship is called Jane Seymour - funny there's no sign of the waist-length locks.



mutant creatures and you've got a space thriller of 'Alien' proportions. The game incorporates effective 3D graphics which enhance the feeling of involvement.

COR!!! It's Core

Creators of the highly enjoyable Rick Dangerous, Switchblade and totally accurate conversion, Dynamite Dux, are currently putting the finishing touches to Skidz. This all-way scroller puts you in control of a skateboard or BMX bike in a town which makes Beirut look like a kindergarten playground. Steering your adventurous kid around innumerable hazards you must keep his energy up by eating fruit and drinking body building drink and avoid the many hazards which face the youth of today. The game promises excellent gameplay with incredible graphic techniques - a real corker.

Combo Racer

What makes Gremlin's addition to the prolific rear-view racing games different? Two players can play simultaneously, one driving the bike the other doing acrobatics on the sidecar. Great arguments are predicted if the two-man team is not harmonic.

As you can see Gremlin are hurtling into the 90s with real purpose. The variety of styles and the quality of the games which are due for release in the next twelve months are likely to keep Gremlin at the forefront of game design where they belong.



Simultaneous two player action. Big rows are predicted for unharmonic teams.

QUATRE D'OR AWARD

Domark are flushed after their success at the Quatre d'or awards for Hard Drivin' the best adaptation of an arcade game. The company's best selling driving simulation won this accolade at the Paris awards which was organized by the games magazine Generation 4. Hard Drivin' was in fact nominated for four awards and the game's programmer, Jurgen Friedrich was there to accept the award.

COMPO RESULTS

Here's the results you've been waiting for! After rummaging through sacks of entries for the splendid E.A. compo, we've come up with a winner for the colour TV and thirty runners up who will receive an Electronic Arts game of their choice. First, here are the answers to the tricky posers. B) Bullfrog, C) H.P. Lovecraft, A) The pieces were animated and D) £9.99.

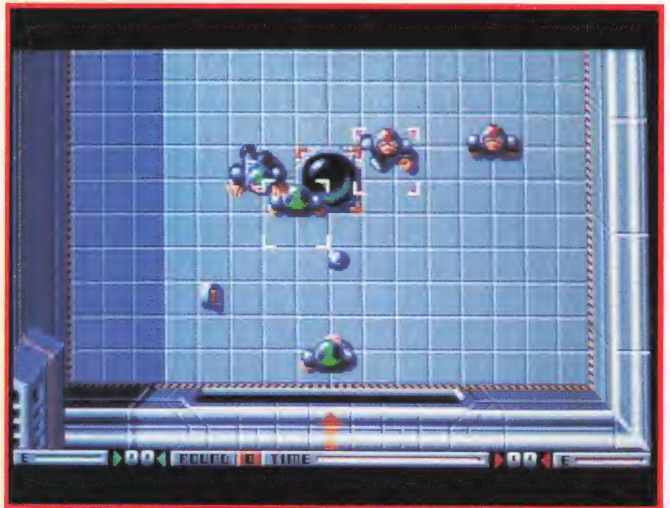
The winner of the 22 inch colour television is, (roll on the drum) A. Hawkins of Aldridge, Walsall in Staffs. Happy viewing Mr Hawkins! The thirty runners up who will receive a game of their choice are (deep breath) Keith Robertson of South Norwood in London, Matthew Campbell from Hackney in London, Leon Symonds in Grimsby Humberside, W. Crawley from Hove in Sussex, Andrew Jones who lives in Robert Town W.Yorks, D. West of Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea Essex, Andrew Bogue from Stourport Worcs, Jonathon Mole from Mitcham, Surrey, C. Blower who hales from Henlow Bedfordshire, Dominic Smith from Healing, South Humberside, A Gillard from Tyersal, Bradford; John Jameson, Dumbarton, Scotland, S. Mills Colliers Wood London, Ashleigh Blair from Ashington, Kent, Mark Chamberlin Horsford, Norwich, Norfolk, T. Castle in Stevenage, Herts, David Birch, Fulwood, Preston Lancs, R. Barrington Stolewood Utoxeter, E O'Connor from Romford Kent, Michael Manning of Basildon Essex, Neil Dodgeson of Sompting West Sussex, M. Rose in Chelmsford Essex, Mathew Tidd from Yapton Sussex, David Robertson from Lanarkshire, Scotland Keith Pickett in Kingshurst, Birmingham, Mark Helps from Barnstable, Colin Jack in West Lothian Scotland, S.D. Momain Darlington County Durham and finally Ralph Davenport from Tickhill in Doncaster. Well done all of you.

BITMAP'S SECRETS OUT

The Bitmaps were gaining a reputation for secrecy over their future games, and one can understand why considering just about every one of their ideas has been copied in one form or another. These vain attempts to cash in on what would undoubtedly be a commercially successful idea really shows a complete lack of originality. Nevertheless, they recently announced that they are doing a sequel to the the highly enjoyable future sport Speedball. Originally entitled Speedball II, this is a much enhanced with loads of new features. Also the gameplay area has been increased to twice the size and the player will be given greater control over the various characteristics of the speedball team. Meanwhile, Dan Mallone, Palace's ex-graphics man and part-time skateboard champ, is doing the graphics for the sequel, although the game is in the very early stages of development. Meanwhile, the original members of the team are busy planning and designing future projects. More news on Speedball II when we get it.

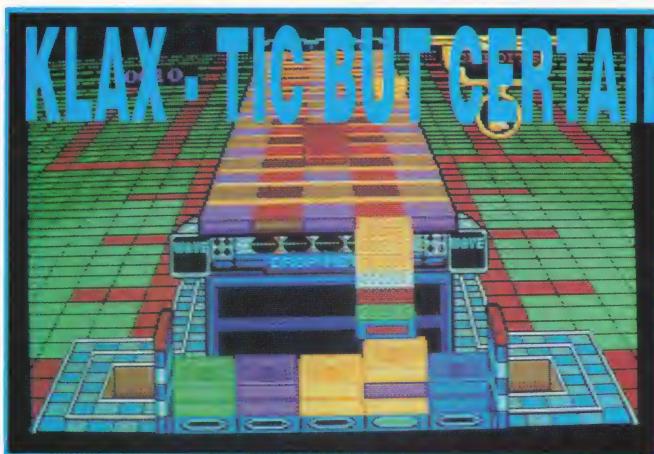


Bitmap Brothers in usual BB stance, are narrowly missed by a passing tram.

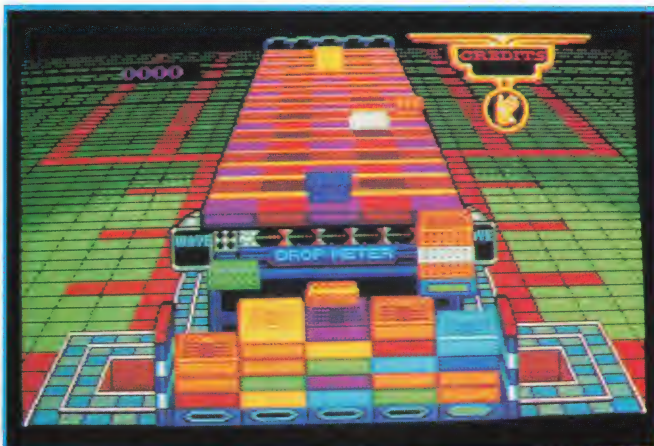


This is the original Speedball which wowed the crowds. But the sequel promises a lot more elbow room and many new features.

KLAX - TIC BUT CERTAINLY NOT TAC



Domark momentarily leave the big license names to present us with a very simplistic tic tac tile game, Klax.



Releasing an original game which doesn't have a license attached.

Billed as a: 'the tic tac tile game' Klax is due for release in April on the prolific Domark/Tengen label. Domark's boast is that this little number is the first game to be developed in parallel with a coin-op version. This is the first time that a coin-op manufacturer has worked so closely with a software house. The idea is simple; catch coloured tiles as they roll down the screen and flip them into the bins below. The aim is to arrange the tiles in lines of three of the same colour - horizontal, vertical or diagonal. Klax is already in the arcade.

After concentrating on expensive film licenses, Domark are reverting back to original game concepts.



Domark are claiming a bit of a coup, producing arcade and home computer versions simultaneously.

Austerlitz

COMING SOON ON ATARI ST, AMIGA & PC



*Get ready to experience the
Horror and Glory that was the
battle of Austerlitz!*

The date is the 2nd December 1805. The place is a few miles east of Brunn in the province of Moldavia. Ranged across the barren Pratzen heights are the forces of the Austro-Russian army. Facing them, between Santon Hill and the River Bosenitz is Napoleon's Grand Armée. The greatest battle ever to be fought by France's 'Little Corporal' is about to begin.

Using a unique system developed by Dr. Peter Turcan, AUSTERLITZ gives you the opportunity to relive that battle. The battlefield is represented on your screen in incredible 3D graphics. You can actually observe your troops as they move and fight their way across the terrain.

Your orders are written out for your Corps Commanders, just as they would have been at the actual battle, and then relayed by messenger riders. Of course, orders might be reinterpreted, ignored, or even fail to get to their anticipated destination, and even if they do arrive, it all takes time - exactly the sort of problems faced by Napoleon and the Russian Czar Alexander on that cold winter day.

Play AUSTERLITZ, and take up the challenge that gives you the chance to rewrite the history books!

Written and designed by Dr Peter Turcan. Illustration by Peter Carrington.



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SYSTEM 3's VENDETTA

There are scenarios that are totally irrelevant, there are scenarios that induce yawns but here's a story that'll have every red-blooded hero wanting to jump into action. A youth terrorist group has kidnapped a leading scientist and his beautiful and horny daughter. A video showing the fraught victims next to an atomic device has been sent to the police. Now the fiendishly cunning terrorists state that if their demands are not met, the

device will be detonated. A mercenary (that's you) has been hired to track them down and rescue the scientist and make safe the device. With few clues, you must blast your way through hordes of guerrillas and collecting items to aid your mission. The game is split into two sections, an isometric graphic environment and a sub game which involves racing in an F40 to reach the device before it blows. There's another seven months development



This early shot of Vendetta shows the isometric environment where your mercenary will search for and eliminate the terrorists.

time, but STA will update you on the game.

The game promises a variety of gameplay from Commando-style shooty bang

bang action to driving simulation, and there's even an element of strategy. Vendetta is due out around Christmas, so don't hold your breath.

From the cobbled streets of gay Paris to the dusty track of Dakar can we expect some variety from Tomahawk this time?



ON THE ROAD TO DAKAR

Remember Coktel Vision's African Raiders which majored on graphics and minored on gameplay? Now Tomahawk are releasing a sequel based on the famous Paris to Dakar race. There's 5000 miles of race ahead of you ranging from the hustle and bustle of the French capital to the wide open space of the Sahara Desert. There's pre-race preparation to be

considered and you'll be able to choose supplies for the gruelling race. As an added incentive, Tomahawk are giving away a brand new Peugeot 205 to the person who scores the highest - I don't know about you, but I'm on the way to Dakar. A release date has yet to be set for the ST version but the price will be £24.95.

WIPE OUT!

Do we need another game publishing company? According to Gonzo Games, yes we do! Dealing in original games, Gonzo are dedicated to pulling the games market out of the license-orientated doldrums. The team say they have achieved this independence by being ever so

slightly mad, and their first release is a surfing game called Wipe Out. By the looks of the game, you control a surfer keep him from wiping out and impressing the judges with style panache. More news of this off-the-wall company and their premier game when we get it!



Will Gonzo and its first game Wipe out be the answer to our prayers? We're just going to have to wait and see.

SONIC BOOM BOY

Activision's coin-op conversion factory is still running at full capacity as they start the latest Sega success, Sonic Boom Boy. This vertical-scroller puts you at the controls of a futuristic plane in search of a powerful and fanatical terrorist group who have taken over military bases and true to form you must waste the rotten swines. Usual arcade features such as beefing up weaponry and a veritable sackful of bonuses makes this a fun but uncomplicated, sprite-driven coin-op. For a change, this is a practical candidate for conversion.

ELECTRONIC ARTS TRIP THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

Langley-based software company, Electronic Arts has announced the release of the Science fiction, fantasy role-playing game Starflight. The objective is to find colonizable worlds, gather mineral ores and ancient artifacts and learn the secrets of the various alien races. Starflight is an adventure/strategy-style game which could be best described as a spacecraft commander simulator which promotes pacificatory achievements rather than blowing aliens up. A



Collecting minerals, colonizing planets and being nice to aliens is the order of the day in Starflight. Although blasting aliens isn't encouraged, the ship is well endowed with lasers, missiles, shields and armour.

release date is set for the start of April priced at £24.99. In the meantime, Electronic Arts are putting the finishing touches to their other intergalactic title, Imperium. Set in the year 2020 A.D., this sophisticated space-

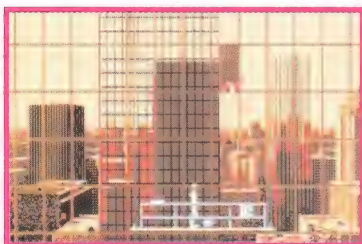
trading game will be full of political intrigue and corruption. Imperium should arrive towards the end of April and will cost £24.95. Watch out for next month's full review in your favourite ST mag.

Award winning Future Wars from France's leading software development house Delphine.



FUTURE'S SO BRIGHT

Delphine's Future Wars picked up another three accolades at the Quatre D'or awards. These awards are presented as a result of voting by the readers of France's leading sixteen-bit magazines. Delphine won the award of Top French Publisher and Future Wars came first in the Best French Game and Best Adventure. 'Wars' previously received two Tilt D'or and the British industry award for best foreign game.



Future Wars scooping up awards and accolades where ever it goes.

MORE NINJA NONSENSE

Activision are hoping for an imminent release of Ninja Spirit which'll be rubbing nunchakas on the software shelves with the dozens of ninja related titles. This 'spirited' martial arts romp has been converted from the popular Irem coin-op of the same name. The game consists of seven levels in which you must guide the Ninja over various precarious hazards and obstacles and grapple with nasty ninjas swordsmen, kitemen and wolves. parallax scrolling plays an important part as you travel through forests, marshland and bamboo on the way to the final battle with, who else, the Last Warlock. Weaponry is more than the usual Nunchakas as you are equipped with sword, dynamite and lassoon razor blade. Price of Ninja Spirit £24.95.

ELVIRA'S COMING OUT PARTY

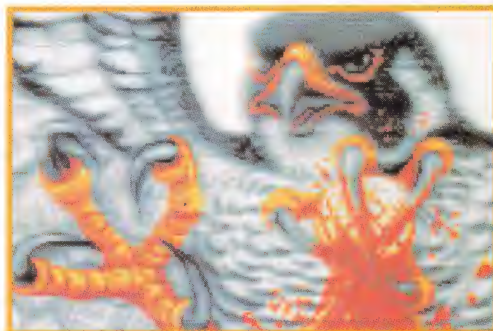
Over the past six months, Elvira has been putting herself about a bit, appearing on various chat shows, movies, and even hosting rock shows. Now Horrorsoft's game of the same name is about to be released on the ST. When I checked on the progress of the game back in December most of the graphics and effects had been drawn and the team; Mike Woodruff, Allen Bridgeman and Keith Whadams were implementing the puzzles and gameplay. Their previous adventure was the popular Personal Nightmare, an epic which spanned some six disks. But they reckon they had only achieved about seventy percent of what they wanted to in the game. But the team are really chuffed with Elvira because both graphically and in game content they have achieved that extra thirty percent which eluded them in Nightmare. This is largely due to the artificial intelligence which features strong in the game, as team leader, Mike Woodruff explained. The player has a free rein to do anything and go anywhere he wants to, unlike most adventures which say you can't do this or you can't go there. So there could be a number of conclusions to a certain configuration of actions.' The game goes under the banner of adventure, but you may suddenly be faced with a sword fight to the death with some crazed fiend and so physical arcade gameplay plays its part. With Elvira being



Horrorsoft's Mike Woodruff admires Elvira's comely points at the recent 16-bit User Show.

put to bed, so to speak, Horrorsoft are working on a number of ideas, some in complete contrast to the horror genre. Mad Mitch is a World War II jungle battle game

viewed from first-person perspective, which again combines aspects of adventure, strategy and arcade gameplay. Elvira is due to be released at any time now, priced at £29.95.



U.S. GOLD GETTING ALL ADVENTUROUS

U.S. Gold announce that they are to represent the European fantasy/role-playing software house, New World Computing, in Britain. New World are releasing three titles around Easter time, Might and Magic II, a much enhanced sequel, Nuclear War which is based on the popular Nuclear War Card Game - played for laughs

'Whoops Apocalypse' style, and King's Bounty a strategy adventure. New World are also working on a massive role-playing game based on Tunnels and Trolls, which is pitched for the end of the year. New World takes pride of place next to U.S. Gold's other adventure role/play labels Lucas Arts andSSI.

ALL CHANGE

Notice anything different about this month's issue? Yup, new boy, Alex Simmons has miraculously been replaced by the initials SW. So, who is this shady character? He's none other than Stephen White, one time reviewer with Amiga Action. We'd like to take this opportunity to welcome "Whitey" aboard.

THE LETTERS DESK

Now it's your turn. What have you got to say for yourselves?

What do you feel about after-sales service?

Do you feel that today's software offers value for money?

Just what would you like to see in ST Action?

If you've got any views, comments, or questions then drop us a line. Don't forget the most thought-provoking letter will win its writer the game of his choice. Get scribbling! The Letters Desk, ST Action, Latham House, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 2NY.

FROM THE TOP

"Happy birthday to us, happy birthday to us, happy birthday...", well, here we are at issue twenty-four already. Over the past two years we've seen nearly every games related product available for the ST. We've strived to present you with the finest and fairest reviews and constantly aimed to better ourselves in the never ending search for excellence. As the proud Editor of your favourite ST magazine, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have contributed in any way.

A QUESTION OF NEED

Which machine is the best; the ST, the PC engine or all the rest? Why did Atari make the ST so poor in the video and audio departments? I refuse to buy an Amiga just to play Shadow of the Beast and It came from the Desert. By the way, when will these games be available for the ST? In the meantime, I have yet more questions for you. Are Ocean Software going to be releasing WEC Le Mans, Guerilla Wars and Green Beret for the ST? What about HATE and Ramrod from Gremlin? Do you know anything concerning Martech's Rex, Fury or Phantom Fighter?

Finally, would you believe me if I told you that Rainbow Islands, Power Drift, Toobin', Bad Company, Moonwalker, the Lost Patrol and countless other titles have been available here commercially since September and October?

Bob Linn,
Tel-Aviv, Israel.

Hi there, Bob, how's the weather out there? Anyway, in reply to your many questions. Firstly, attempting to distinguish which machine is the better is pretty pointless. For instance, the PC engine is an excellent games machine while the ST is versatile in most fields. Really it's just a matter of what you want to do with your computer. As for your questions regarding software: Ocean have no plans to release the games you mentioned. Gremlin have already released HATE and Ramrod should be available any time now. Meanwhile, Martech are no longer in business and therefore have no plans to release anything.

Finally, I'm certain that games such as the Lost Patrol are not available in Israel. How can a title that hadn't even been started on the ST be on offer during September?

IS THERE ANYBODY OUT THERE?

Just a short note from a stricken Atarian whose poor life as a gamester now hangs in tatters. After saving my hard earned pennies and doing various odd jobs around our village (walking the goat, sheep-shearing the chickens etc.), I found I finally had enough dosh to go out and buy that much maligned machine, the Atari 1040 STE.

With sweaty hands, I ripped off the packaging, plugged in the power supply and connected the hand held photon cannon... I was ready. However, to my utter amazement the game failed to load. I tried another and that, too, failed. Oh, drat (and other such phrases sprang to mind)! After thoroughly checking my entire games collection, I found that no less than fourteen games were incompatible with the new operating system.

I am currently going through the lengthy and expensive business of writing and phoning all of the various software houses asking to have my games upgraded or changed for new ones.

However, the point of this letter is that many of the company telephone numbers and addresses were incredibly hard to find. So, for the other Atarians out there who might share this problem, can you please print a comprehensive list of all the major software companies' addresses and telephone numbers. It would save countless hours of frustration and quite a lot on the phone bills too!

Matthew Shackleton,
Shipley, West Yorkshire.

Salutations, Matthew. Thanks for dropping us a line. Like you, many others are discovering the shortfalls of Atari's new baby. The problem with the incompatibility of games seems to lie with the programmers. Apparently, when Atari produced the ST they set down a series of specifications to which programs should

comply. However, in order to produce more varied effects, programmers ignored the specs. Games which fail to comply with the Atari guidelines may not work with the new STE.

As for a full and detailed list of all the software houses addresses and phone numbers, I'm afraid that such a list would take up the best part of this Letters Desk. If you're in any doubt as to the details of a specific company, drop us a line and we'll fill you in.

BOMBER A SITTING DUCK

I am an avid fan of all types of flight simulators and air combat games. In the past I have purchased Spectrum Holobyte's Falcon and Digital Integration's F16 Combat Pilot, and found them both excellent in their own ways. Having mastered both games, I was excited to learn of Activision's Fighter Bomber. Spurred on by its pre-release hype, I did not hesitate to buy the game when my local stockists finally managed to get copies of it. Handing over my thirty pounds, I believed I was buying a playable flight/air combat simulator. Sadly, I found that Fighter Bomber fell far short of the mark.

For instance; all the different types of aircraft you could choose to pilot, despite having slightly different cockpit layouts, flew in the same slow and labourious manner which does not relate to real flight at all.

Although the graphics were excellent, the real-life touches that make a game were definitely lacking, i.e. I actually managed to land on a bomb cratered runway successfully). The air combat usually ended in collisions and dogfighting became a no-go area. In fact, after the first few missions, I found it impossible and tedious to complete anymore missions.

To conclude this sorry saga, I feel I have been misled by magazines and basically ripped off, for a game, that in my opinion, is not worth a tenner, let alone thirty big ones!

The moral of this story is don't buy an expensive game unless you've seen it in action and don't believe all you read in the press (take note, STA).

Alex Ratcliffe,
Norwich, Norfolk.

Hello, Alex, and thanks for your letter. So, you were unimpressed by Activision's Fighter Bomber, eh? Well, to be honest, we agree with your points. The game does seem to have quite a few bugs. For instance, have you flown through Mount Rushmore? Maybe you've managed to fly at zero feet, upside-down! Or perhaps you've flown underneath the Devil's Tower. Personally, I reckon the Kamikaze pilots are the worst feature. I agree that Activision misled many people by claim-

ing the game was the finest, state-of-the-art flight simulator available (I seem to recall a press release claiming that the forces were after it). In fact, what you bought was really a glorified shoot'em-up set within a 3D world.

In response to your comment about not believing everything you read in the press: we at ST Action have always adopted the policy that readers should wait and read our reviews before purchasing any software. If you had done this with Fighter Bomber, you'd have read our opinions and know that the game fell far short of the mark in the simulation department. All I can suggest is that you contact the Customer Services Dept. at Activision, maybe they'll be able to help a dissatisfied customer.

POOR GAMES TESTING

I am writing to inform you of the poor software testing which I feel is currently the trend with games manufacturers.

I am referring to two packages, which I own and have tested, to find out just how many errors there are, although I am sure that many other readers will have found more. The first game I checked was Activision's Fighter Bomber, which I paid £29.95 for. After about four missions, I found that the enemy aircraft are absolutely mad, if they couldn't shoot me out of the sky, they resorted to kamikaze techniques. In my mind this is most unrealistic as no combat pilot, as far as I know, is trained to perform this manoeuvre. It's not simply a case of "we collided", this is deliberate flying straight up my jet's tailpipe. I have written to Activision regarding this matter and am still waiting for an answer.

The second game I tested was the Kick-Off Expansion Disk by Anco. I used it in conjunction with the original program but was disappointed to see that it had several bugs when used with the new disk. Apart from the throw-ins, where the player would throw the ball to a man who wasn't even on the pitch. I paused the game and discovered an even worse bug. For no apparent reason, when a player kicked the ball, the machine would bomb and reset to the desktop. I found this extremely frustrating as I like to play leagues and often play three or four in one sitting. You can imagine my displeasure at having to constantly reload.

I hope you can bring these facts to the attention of your readers as these bugs can only be noticed after you have purchased the games. I actually tested Activision's Fighter Bomber before I bought it and was quite impressed. I still enjoy both games as these bugs do not appear everytime. However, I don't think they should appear at anytime.

Mark Williams,
Ivybridge, Devon.

CHAOTIC SYSTEM CONFIGURATION

After reading your brilliant review about FTL's Chaos Strikes Back, I decided it might be worth buying since I loved Dungeon Master so much.

I went round to my local computer store to take a look at the game. However, I saw the box which said "60hz colour monitors only". Now, this started to worry me since I have a colour monitor but I'm not sure whether it's 50hz or 60hz. The monitor I own is an Atari SC1224. Is it 50hz or 60hz?

If it is 50hz, is there anything I could use to change my monitor into a 60hz since I would be really disappointed if I couldn't buy Chaos Strikes Back.

Adam Amar,
Ilford, Essex.

Greetings, Adam. Only got an Atari SC1224 colour monitor eh? Shame, because it's most definitely a 50hz monitor. Now, I use a Philips CM8833 and that's got a 60hz mode. Still, most people I know have to use their colour TV sets. The moral behind this story is that you can use any colour output device with Chaos so stop feeling disappointed and go and buy the darn game. Meanwhile, thanks for your compliments about the review; both myself and Chris, the Artwork production chappie, feel it's probably the best-looking review ever to appear in ST Action.

CHAOS TOO EASY

I must admit that after seeing your review in February's edition for Chaos Strikes Back, I was eager to try out this sequel to FTL's masterpiece, Dungeon Master. Together with the help of my brother, I completed Dungeon Master back in July 1988 and had been patiently awaiting the release of the sequel. Having bought the game, my first impressions were that with the combination of excellent graphics and total playability, FTL had created yet another great game. However, I soon found the puzzles and problems far too simple (even without the help of the hint oracle). I even managed to complete the whole thing really quickly (in eleven days to be precise). The end sequence is none too impressive either, the basic complementary message from the Great Grey Lord being a sad end to a sad game. Perhaps FTL would have done better by leaving Dungeon Master as the unashamed master of ST role-playing.

Ian Ripley,
Stockport, Cheshire.

Hello, Ian. Seems you weren't too keen on Chaos. Maybe if you tried to solve the various minor puzzles you wouldn't have fin-

ished the game so quickly. I mean, did you discover all of the Dragon and Ra armour? Did you manage to get inside death row? Still, I do agree that the game isn't as good as it could have been. Personally, I believe there should have been more monsters and a whole host of new spells. Still, the box does suggest that the game is only an expansion disk of the original game. Let's all hope that FTL are working hard on their next game, rumoured to be a Dungeon Master clone set in space.

BEWARE OF THE DARK AVENGERS!

Hi Alex, I read about you in ST Action and saw that you were in the Dark Avengers. I have never heard of your group and would like to be your contact in Iceland. To do some trading in copy's I have over two hundred titels and more comes in every day. If you are interested then send me your list of your games. My computer name is "The Spy" or "The Ice Cold Spy" or "T.I.C.S.".

Hafpor Helgason,
Reykjavik, Iceland.

Greetings, Mr. Spy. I'm afraid it seems you have gotten hold of the wrong end of the stick. You see, Alex isn't the international computer hacker you might like to think he is. Oh no, instead, our reviewer is a member of a crack paintball team. In his spare time, Alex and the Dark Avengers creep around woods, derelict buildings and the like, shooting each other with high powered gas guns.

In no way, do we at ST Action, condone the copying, swapping or ripping-off software. Should you persist your illegal pastimes, we'll send the Dark Avengers round to sort you out. You have been warned!

SAVE SPACE FOR THESE ACE GAMES

Thanks for printing the feature on the Don Bluth studios. I am an avid fan of Walt Disney cartoons and have enjoyed and admired the work of Don Bluth and his team for some time now. However, like thousands of other ST owners, I am still waiting for both Dragon's Lair and Space Ace. Please will you tell me when we can expect to see these games, and how much they'll cost?

Joseph McKinney,
Co. Antrim, N.Ireland.

Hello, Joseph. My advice to you is, start saving. Space Ace arrived just the other day and carries the price tag of £39.95. The graphics and animation are excellent, watch out for our full review next month.

THEME PARK MYSTERY

WELCOME TO THE PLEASURE DOME!

What sinister power has forced the Magic Canyon Theme Park to close down? Why does the mere mention of its name send shudders down your spine? What terrible secret drove its former owner mad?

You're the inheritor of this mysterious pleasure dome - only you can find the answer. Step through the creaking turnstile, board the mystery train and experience a fantastic journey through four entirely different zones:

Dream Land, Dragon Land, Future Land and Yesterday Land.

With outstanding visual effects, sinister sound and an infernal plot, this is one mystery you'll never forget. Surviving it is an achievement, solving it is the most challenging part of all.

Once you've stepped through the gates, there's no going back.

OUT SOON ON ATARI ST, AMIGA AND PC

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U.S. GOLD MEGA

WIN A MEGA MIDI SYSTEM!



Software giants, U.S. Gold, certainly have something to shout about. Last year saw them riding high in the software charts with titles such as Strider, Ghouls'n'Ghosts, Forgotten Worlds and Turbo Outrun. 1990 looks set to be another golden year, especially when you consider their latest coin-op conversions; Black Tiger and Crackdown. So, while we at STA are in the party mood (it's our second birthday!), we thought we'd get together with U.S. Gold to bring you this fabulous competition. Of course, being the generous sort, U.S. Gold have offered to give away some amazing goodies. Naturally enough, we're not going to just let you have 'em. Oh no, you're going to have to work

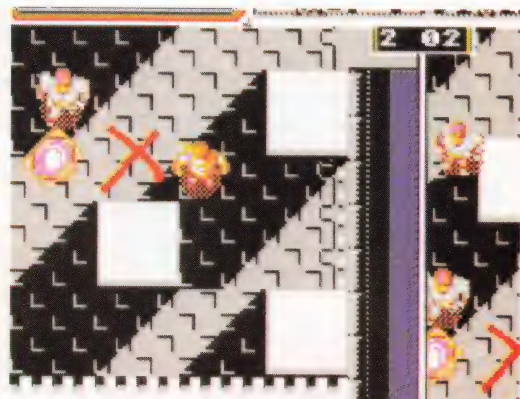
for these prizes. Hidden within the letter grid are a selection of U.S. Gold titles. Now, simply locating the names isn't enough is it? Just to make things more interesting, you're going to have to decipher an anagram. Each letter can be found where two titles intersect. For instance, if you find the names "Interactive" and "ST Action" and they cross through the "T", then that's one of the letters that's in the anagram. In order to win, you'll have to uncover all of the titles in the letter grid, work out the anagram and answer the really easy question.

Before you attempt this mega compo, you might like to know what you might win. Well, how's about a Philips FCD 595? It's a com-

pact disc midi system with some outrageous features, including: six disc multiplay, twin cassette, digital tuner and even remote control! Naturally, these beasts are darn pricey so, just to be fair, U.S. Gold are also offering the chance to win one of the titles featured in the letter grid. Fifty lucky runners-up will win the game of their choice. Right, now you know what's what, get searching. Good luck!

All entries should arrive by April 30th 1990. Send your form to:

**U.S. GOLD MEGA COMPO,
ST ACTION,
LATHAM HOUSE,
QUARRY LANE,
CHICHESTER,
W. SUSSEX, PO19 2NY.**



COMPETITION

B	U	L	F	T	S	H	T	A	A	Q	W	Y	P	D
C	S	A	E	E	T	U	L	I	K	S	E	C	S	B
F	O	U	M	E	R	T	Z	Q	O	B	J	K	S	A
H	O	K	D	E	I	S	D	W	R	V	S	R	V	R
C	R	A	C	K	D	O	W	N	E	T	G	G	H	L
U	D	I	B	B	E	D	S	D	M	A	H	S	M	S
L	D	S	S	W	R	J	S	A	I	A	O	J	S	R
K	O	N	U	R	T	U	O	O	B	R	U	T	D	L
A	N	C	A	S	I	C	A	G	U	J	L	A	J	D
G	B	L	A	T	S	D	A	U	D	E	S	S	N	J
E	R	B	H	A	B	O	P	D	O	F	N	K	L	E
S	D	L	R	O	W	N	E	T	T	O	G	R	O	F
S	K	A	H	O	L	S	D	H	T	A	H	M	H	I
J	S	C	C	E	A	E	P	P	S	E	O	I	I	H
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£1000 OF TOP SOFTWARE MUST BE WON!

WORD POOL

FORGOTTEN WORLDS
TURBO OUTRUN, CAPCOM
STRIDER, CRACKDOWN
GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS, SEGA
BLACK TIGER

REALLY EASY QUESTION

NAME THE TWO HEROES IN U.S. GOLD'S LATEST COIN-OP CONVERSION, CRACKDOWN.

ST Action Competition Rules

No one ever reads this bit. However, if you're really bored, we've created yet another source of entertainment. Try randomly opening the magazine, if you find the other compo, you'll discover the compo rules. Fun, eh?

The answers to the US Gold Mega competition are:

The anagram is:

The answer to the really easy question is:

Name.....

Address

.....

.....

Post code

Daytime telephone number

The game I'd like to win is:

DRAGONS BREATH



Immortality. Legend has it that the secret is hidden in the Throne Room of the Great Castle atop Dwarf Mountain at the centre of the land of Anrea.

Breed a fighting force of dragons and conquer the villages of Anrea. Collect taxes and buy magic ingredients from passing traders to cast spells. Finally, complete the Talisman that guides you to your ultimate goal.

Dragons Breath. A Fantasy Strategy game for up to three people.

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PALACE

INCLUDES FREE Spellbook

DISKMANIA!



Once again, ST Action presents you with a veritable jamboree of forthcoming releases. This month, Jason Spiller, (ST Action's answer to the man from Delmonte), travelled the length and breadth of the country in search of a fine mixture of hot releases for the front cover disk.

What other front cover disk could combine, in a single month, the horrors of Nam in Lost Patrol, whacky platform action in Kid Gloves and a game which Psygnosis call: 'It Can't Be Done'.



The cover disk and disk special section is edited by Jason Spiller who is, as we speak, visiting the top software designers in Europe for next month's issue's fine selection of front cover disk demos.

Welcome to our fourth front cover disk feature. In case you have missed the previous issues, the objective of this disk feature mini-mag is to take the game review a stage further than just still screenshots, descriptions and personal criticisms. The mini-mag provides a profile of the game designers who have produced the games as well as full instructions and a resume of what can be expected in the final game. The aims of the disk and accompanying features are twofold. The profile enables you to get to know the characters behind the game and the techniques they have adopted to program and design it - a sort of working profile. Then, you can turn to the front-cover disk and enjoy a taster of the final version of the game. This, we believe brings the game designers and the games players closer together, allowing the designers to see what we really want.

MINI-MAG

You will no doubt be aware that there are a number of magazines which regularly feature a front cover disk, but we reckon that what we have to offer is a cut above the rest. Invariably, the disks which feature on magazines usually contain one playable demo of a forthcoming release. But because they are either multi-format magazines or not dedicated to games, the rest of the disk space is taken up with in-house programs or business utilities, which will be of little interest to games players. As a reader of ST Action you will have enjoyed a full colour magazine which deals solely with ST games, and you will have benefitted from the honesty, frankness and knowledge of the reviewers. Now we intend to extend this quality to our front-cover disk and mini-mag which will

refer to the front-cover disk demos.

This month's disk features three major releases which again cover three different game styles that should appeal to most tastes. The playable demos have been designed to convey what sort of game it is, and if it is a game which consists of various game-styles, such as an arcade adventure, there will be still shots of the sections on the disk as well as in the mini-mag. In doing this, we can feature all styles of game on the disk, rather than just featuring shoot'em-ups and platform games.

BONUS

I think you'll agree that the opportunity of being able to try out a variety of games each month is a real bonus as you actually play the games before lashing out on them. For the software developer and publisher, both the front cover demo and the feature is a great example of their skills and abilities both to the reader and to the industry. Finally, in featuring a playable demo of forthcoming releases, the publishers are demonstrating their faith in the product. Of course, the best way of testing a game is to play it, so you can guarantee that the demos of games which feature on the front cover of ST Action are well worth checking out.

If in the unlikely event that your disk is faulty, please return it to 'ST Action, Faulty Cover Disk', Interactive Publishing Ltd, Latham House, Quarry Lane, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 2NY. If you damage the disk yourself, but would like another copy, return the disk to the same address and include a cheque or postal order for £1.50.

Subscribers to ST Action can choose whether or not to have the front cover disk with their monthly subscription for an extra £1.00 for each month. Look for the Diskmania feature in future issues of ST Action.

COVERDISK SPECIAL: QUICK START

DISK SIDE ONE

•'IT CAN'T BE DONE' - PSYGNOSIS

Boot up and click on the file ICBP.PRQ. With the Joystick in port 1, you control a spacecraft across the planet surface and your task is to save the space station personnel seeking cover from the alien assault. Collect small pods for extra weaponry, avoid all contact with aliens and missiles and protect the personnel from possible kidnap.

•KID GLOVES - LOGOTRON ENTERTAINMENTS

Boot up and click on the file Gloves.PRQ. With joystick in port 1 you must guide Kid through a hazardous prehistoric terrain. Avoid contact with all other characters, use the blocks to reach higher platforms and fire Deathcoins by pressing the firebutton. Collect fruit for energy and keys to unlock blocked entrances.

DISK SIDE TWO

•LOST PATROL - SHADOW DEVELOPMENTS/OCEAN

Boot up and click on the file Patrol.PRQ. The demo features the sniper section from the final game and you must pick the best shot in your section of men and with mouse controls trail the sight over the terrain and shoot the enemy sniper. Pressing the mouse button is the equivalent of squeezing the trigger.

SIDE 1



The ST Action cover disk is shaping up to check out a great variety of forthcoming releases. This month, Psygnosis, who are respected worldwide for their stunning graphical and sonic achievements, present a terrific arcade game called 'It Can't Be Done.' Although the game exploits the traditional arcade qualities of the classic Defender, it demonstrates the fastest and smoothest horizontal scrolling graphics ever achieved on the ST.



Defender has been popular since video machines were introduced in the arcade. Now Psygnosis present a much enhanced version of the game with the fastest horizontal scrolling ever seen on home computer screens. Discover what your joystick was really designed for!

IT CAN'T BE DONE

There's a game which has remained a firm favourite in the arcades for more than a decade. This game is quite simply a winning video game formula - this game is Defender! There have been numerous attempts to reproduce the arcade game on home computers and some have even tried to better it - few, if any, have come anywhere near it. Now, Psygnosis pay homage to this timeless arcade classic with an updated and considerably enhanced Defender clone which is set to end all Defender cloning. It is called, 'It Can't Be Done' (working title). Until now, you and your joystick may only be used to the comparatively somnolent games available on the ST and so you're probably a bit out of condition. So here's a playable demo that'll really test your mettle. The objective of the game, which has been handed down through time-honoured arcade tradition, is quite straightforward. You must forge a lone battle against a race of usurping aliens who are routing the planet destroying moonbases. The personnel from the bases have no option but to flee the bases in a blind panic. But this is a planet that makes Holland look like the Himalayas and so there's no hiding place for them - they're literally sitting ducks. These variform aliens dart across the planet skies as quick as lightning, swooping down to grab the stricken moonbase personnel and kidnapping them, presumably, for despicable experimental purposes. Your task is to annihilate the aliens and protect the personnel from abduction.

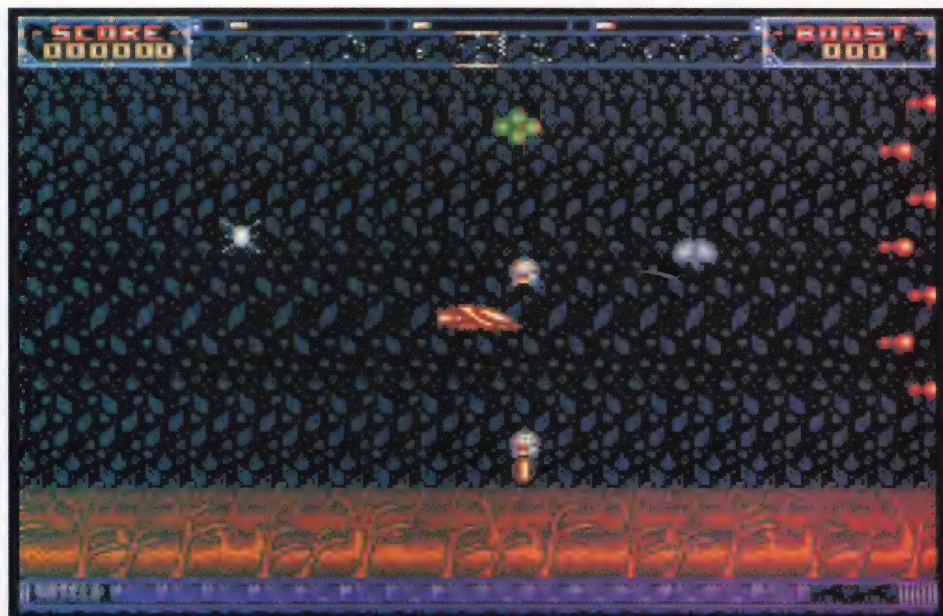
HOW TO PLAY

This playable demo of Psygnosis's 'It Can't Be Done' (working title) consists of a level taken

from the finished version which boasts considerable gameplay potential. To load the playable demo of the game, which features on Side 1 of your ST Action disk, insert the demo disk in the drive and boot up. Now look at the main menu screen and you will see a file labelled ICBT. PRG. Click here and the game will load. First, the screen displays two options, Inertia and Anything. Anything has no effect, it has merely been left there so that the game's designers can put in a feature for the final version. Inertia, however, has a considerable effect on the gameplay. Remember your science lessons? Well if you choose Inertia, it has a strange effect on your assault craft. But more of that later.

There's no initiation ceremony, you're just jettisoned across the planet surface to face the enemy. The variform alien force are everywhere, each individual craft adopting its own attack pattern. Some snake across the sky, others fly across in formation, while demented rogue ships dart about erratically and unpredictably. Add to this enemy satellites that hug the sky and drop bombs, and stomping boots which crush the personnel in their tracks and you can see that you're up against some opposition. In true arcade tradition, there's no time to admire the scenery. But if you did sacrifice a life to admire your surroundings, you'd see deep parallax graphics and the smoothest and fastest horizontal scrolling ever achieved on the ST. Impressive stuff - so much so that you might be forgiven for uttering the sentiments of the working title, 'It Can't Be Done.'

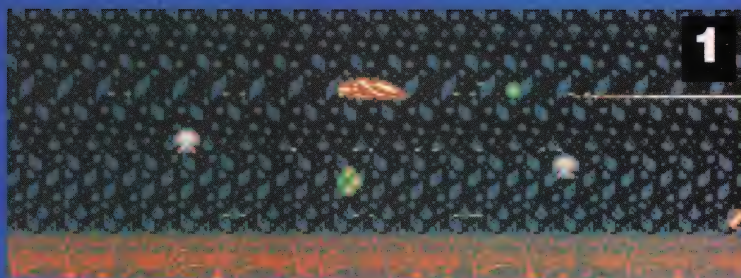
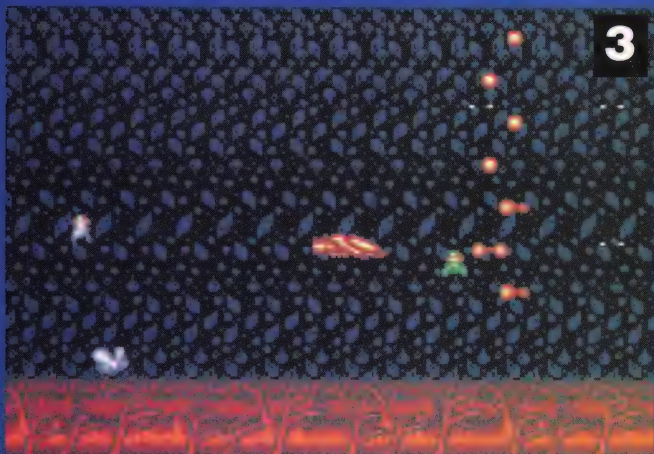
Your objective is to wipe out the invading force and protect the personnel which can be identified by small wheels with a bar across them which trundle along the planet. These spheres roll across the terrain, desperate for cover and you must give them aerial support,



You command the super-fast assault craft and if you've got time in between dodgin' a multitude of alien cannon fodder, you must save the poor stricken mites who are running from the evil swines. Here an alien craft has homed in on one of the space station's crew members - your objective to protect and rescue.

BLAST 'EM TO HELL AND BACK

It's all out war. Fly up behind and let him have it, while missiles spin around the assault ship, rebounding off the terrain and hurtle towards you. But sometimes you've just gotta forget the menial space crew - self preservation is of primary importance!



although self-preservation is of paramount importance. Keep your eyes peeled for small pods that float down to the planet surface which, if collected, beef up the weaponry system considerably or strengthens your shield protection. Additional weaponry features include a separate rocket launcher which is attached by a tractor beam, and by moving the joystick up and down it can be moved close to the ship for support or sent any distance upwards to clear the way. Other weaponry additions include extra laser power or a bolac which spins around the ship trouncing all that venture too near. Act quickly, time is running out for the personnel on the planet. But first check out this profile of the game's designer and programmer, Wayne Smithson.

PROFILE: WAYNE SMITHSON

'It Can't Be Done' may sound like a pedantic title, but when it's a claim made by leading graphic innovators, Psygnosis, you know it's not to be taken lightly. Psygnosis are on the leading edge of graphic and sonic design, as

well as original game concepts. But on this rare occasion, they have elected to pay homage to that all time classic Defender. I asked Psygnosis's project manager, John White, why? "Wayne had been working on various projects for us and he showed me a full-screen, horizontal-scrolling routine with parallax graphics which was the fastest and smoothest I'd ever seen on the ST. So we decided to base an arcade game around the effect and a Defender-style game seemed to be a popular choice." Considering his youthfulness, Wayne Smithson has pulled off quite a few coups in the programming world and has been a major innovator in sixteen-bit game design: "I started off writing simple routines and games on the Spectrum, which was very limiting and I really didn't get into until I moved up to a Dragon and learnt machine code." During this learning process Smithson got to know the operating systems inside out and started designing and implementing routines.

This dedication payed off when some of his games were published and this funded his next acquisition, a 520ST and various external

drives: "My first project was Skyrider. It was about the time that Goldrunner was released and everyone was saying that it was impossible to get the ST to scroll fast and smooth horizontally - I wanted to prove them wrong." Skyrider was the first horizontal scroller to be released on the ST, although Steve Bak was working simultaneously on Return to Genesis. Smithson started his first game for Psygnosis, Baal. He continued: "Baal took a year to write because I kept having to rewrite my routines to get the game to scroll properly - you live and learn!" With his experience gained in a commercial environment and the success of the Baal project, Psygnosis commissioned Smithson to program Blood Money. The somnolent pace of Blood Money was totally different to the super fast scrolling that Smithson had striven for in the past, but this was no less a challenge? "Blood Money is such a clever game - slow scrolling and yet frantic action all the way. The biggest problem was to get all those massive sprites to scroll smoothly."

Smithson actually wrote I.C.B.D. as a demo: "Nobody had done horizontal scrolling shoot'em-up at arcade speed before." Why had horizontal scrolling considered impossible on the ST for so long? "Simply because, although you can hardware scroll vertically, you can't horizontally. So the difficulty arises when you try to shift graphics, there's no parallel shifter on the ST and so the process is slow and impractical. Of course the more you put on screen or the bigger the game area, the slower the process time and the slower the scroll." So how has Smithson achieved a full-screen, horizontal-scrolling, arcade-speed game? "Simple, I cheat! It's an illusion and I'm not going to tell you anymore." I pressed him. "Believe it or not, the whole game takes up no more than 10K in graphics, but that expands on the machine to 520K. It's quite easy really! The only difficulty is implementing the graphics because the scrolling effect is quite inflexible. That's why although the graphics are detailed they're small in relation to the game screen." Why a Defender clone? Smithson answered: "Defender is still one of the most enjoyable horizontal-scrolling arcade games and with the enhanced graphics, speed and parallax scrolling, It Can't Be Done is a great combination." The full version of the game is due for release in April, from Psygnosis.

I.C.B.D. game designer, Wayne Smithson, is responsible for getting the ST scrolling sideways in the first place. Years ago, when all around were saying it couldn't be done on the ST, he went'n did it!



SIDE**1**

**STATION GAMES
DISK
SPECIAL
FEATURE**

Bored with 3D vector graphics?

Pining for the old days when arcade games were arcade games and 3D graphic demos were just that, demos? Well, here's a game that'll have you reminiscing. Kid Gloves, which features on Side 1 of your ST Action front cover disk, shows that the traditional arcade formulas are timeless.

Published by Logotron Entertainments, this platform game supreme is a combination of old arcade qualities and new and original features which bring the theme right up to date. Here are the loading and playing instructions for the playable demo, as well as an interview with the scholastic game designer, Tim Closs.



KID GLOVES

Logotron are renowned for their imaginative scenarios and this one is no exception. 'One Sunday afternoon, Kid was stuck in the dining room with his great uncle Indiana Stallone. 'When I was young'... his great uncle began. That was enough for Kid! He quietly slipped down from his chair and crept out of the room. the old man was always going on about his younger days and told the most ridiculous stories. With his uncle's stories ringing in his ears, Kid climbs into the loft and discovers his uncle's old boxing gloves. Anyway, to cut a long but amusing story very short, the gloves begin to glow and Kid is suddenly whisked away to a strange land, a prehistoric forest, and to cut the tale literally to the quick, this land contains just some of his uncle's tallest stories.

There are five levels in the final game which take our Kid through prehistoric rain forests where cavemen beat drums and skulls, to ancient Egypt where the pharaoh just dont play pharaoh. Next is the cutest level of the lot as Kid jumps from iceflow to iceberg where penguins play and frolic. In contrast, the next level is set in 1876 London; in this dismal world, you must guide Kid through factories and over chimneys trying not to take too many lungfuls of noxious smog. Finally, it's 1967 and you emerge in the time of love and peace, where psychodelia is a five syllable word. Gaudy and tasteless backdrops are in abundance with paisley and flower patterns spinning your eyeballs. Watch out for whacky hippies and don't trip over your flares our Kid!

PLAYING INSTRUCTIONS

This excruciatingly tempting little teaser of Kid Gloves contains one level of the game, although five massive levels feature in the final version. To load the playable demo of Kid Gloves, boot up the disk and click on the file

labelled GLOVES.PRГ and the game will load automatically. When the demo loads you have the option to press fire to start the game and play the demo level or leave the computer and watch a demonstration of the levels which will feature in the final game - don't touch the keyboard or joystick until you've seen all that you want to.

Kid appears in the prehistoric forest and you must guide him across the hazardous terrain. Your objective is to help Kid get back to his own time through five strange and different eras. But there are many hazards and obstacles to overcome. A variety of beasts roam around threatening to trounce our Kid but these creatures can be eliminated with your magic Deathcoins which shoot out by pressing the firebutton. The obstacles can be jumped or walked around, but others will need to be overcome with special set manoeuvres. Some of the obstacles are solid and need to be opened with keys. Blocks, which tumble down when touched are as much a help as they are a hazard, as you can use them as steps to reach higher platforms. Some ledges disappear if you fall on them which causes anything that was resting on them to fall down. If you manage to collect a smart bomb, tapping the spacebar obliterates all enemy in your immediate area. Additionally, if you manage to collect some magic you can cast a spell by pressing the Return key.

TIM CLOSS

Like so many game designers, Tim Closs's interest in computers was sparked off by Sir Clive's one and only practical invention, the Spectrum: *"I used to write code listings for 'Your Computer', but it took two years before I actually got a game published, which was about five or six years ago."* Closs's first games were well received by a game-hungry computer public: *"I think Bomber Bob was the first, and then Bug Byte and Tremor, which I wrote over a six month period. I actually sold the games*



Scholarly Tim Closs. Kid Gloves may be his last project as the pressures of pure maths exams take their toll.

to U.S. Gold and they did rather well." On the strength of his early successes, the young Closs went on to write what must be his most successful and acclaimed game to date, I-Ball. But this success didn't go to his head: 'I-Ball was, I thought, wrongly placed in the budget priced bracket, because what it lacked in physical presence it more than made up for in gameplay.' Never a truer word was spoken! I-Ball dominated the Gallup charts, holding onto the number one position for weeks and the game was showered with accolades from magazines - a real feather in the young protege's hat!

But Closs's extra-curricular activities had to take a back-seat as the scholar prepared for his exams, and his last project was the football game, European Five-a-side. Again, Five-a-side did equally well, reaching the number one position and gaining praise all round, confirming Closs's reputation as one switched-on game designer. But despite this promising start, there was to be a sabbatical while his educational career demanded his full attention once again.

Kid Gloves is Closs's sixteen-bit debut game - he did the programming, graphics and music himself. Recently, I caught up with this 'Jack-of-all-trades' at Cambridge, where he's currently studying pure Mathematics. Tim has designed and programmed Kid Gloves in his free time and holidays, and the game has the spark of humour and tantalizing gameplay that made I-Ball so popular. But the current trend is for stunning 3D graphics, so is there still a market for a platform game like Kid Gloves? Tim answers in no uncertain terms: "How many times have you played a graphically-stunning game which is a complete let down in the gameplay department. I mean, do you buy an arcade game to ogle at nice graphics or to be thoroughly entertained? I know which I prefer, and that's why I've concentrated on most games. I-Ball was no looker and that's why it was relegated to a budget label. But the game reached number one in the charts and I'll bet the people who bought it for £1.99 really got their money's worth."

Kid Gloves combines aspects of the traditional platform game with some highly original. Tim described the production of the game: "I-Ball seemed pretty popular so I decided to use this as a base, update the graphics and enhance the gameplay." There are similarities with Rick Dangerous. Was the game inspirational in the making of Kid Gloves? "I've only just recently played the game. Obviously, there are similarities as they are both advanced platform games, but you only have to play them to see they're different. The game is designed around blocks and each section of the game is a combination of dodging the enemy and getting sections of blocks to fall and move to your advantage. The blocks are a major obstacle, but you can't do without them."

Closs has combined the traditional aspects of arcade play with up-to-date features. "There are shops where you can buy different types of weaponry such as smart bombs, and purchasing magic and keys to locked doors is crucial to your progress." What sort of enemy lurks in Kid Gloves? "There are vector meemies, time out badies and evil eyes that home in on you. Meanwhile, bouncing flames threaten to set you alight, spikes protrude in and out and water obviously drowns you." Is Closs planning another project? "I have to concentrate on my exams and so game design will be suspended for couple of years. The royalties will get me through college and when I leave, who knows?"

KID GLOVES ON HIS TRAVELS

There are five levels in the final game which take our Kid through prehistoric rain forest to ancient Egypt; to the frozen Arctic Wastes where Kid jumps from iceflow to icebergs; to 1876 where the industrial revolution in London has turned the whole world grey and drab and finally 1967 where you emerge in the time of love and peace, flower power and paisley patterned kaftans.



(Left) After yet another boring story from his great uncle Indiana, young Kid finds himself locked in a timewarp. He somehow manages to get from a dusty attic in Wealsdon into a prehistoric forest, fraught with prehysterical nastiness. Now the lad, with your help, must battle through his ancient land in order to get back to Wealsdon in the 1990's.

(Right) In ancient Egypt, Kid faces the wrath of Pharaohs who just don't play pharaoh. Here Kid must demolish beautiful masonry (not for lovers of archaeology this level)



(Left) In this chilly ice world, Kid must avoid the penguins if he wants to feel the sun on his cherub-like face again.

(Right) Boulders jump up and down as if caught in some crazy gravity field. In the final version of the game, you must use these boulders to move through this stone age.



LOST PATROL

**STATION GAMES DISK
SPECIAL
FEATURE**

You're in charge of a section of men who have been separated from the rest of the platoon. The demo of Lost Patrol which features on the front cover disk is just one section of a game which encompasses many aspects of the war, both strategy and physical battle. In the heat of the war, all hell's broken loose. Morale is perilously low, the men have degenerated into vicious dogs and even you are indifferent to the atrocities which once sickened you to the pit of your stomach. VCs, comrades in arms, peasants and their children, nobody can be trusted - even your own men are turning against you. Weak, hungry and with a possible mutiny on your hands, you lead the men through the torrid jungle, halfheartedly checking for possible attack - right now, death seems like a tempting alternative to this misery.

LET'S PLAY

This, the unarmed combat section of Ocean's Lost Patrol, places you deep in the jungle, face to face with a Viet Cong and his loaded rifle - you are literally a sitting duck. To load up this playable demo of Lost Patrol, turn to the main menu screen and click on the file labelled Patrol.PRG. The game will load and the screen will reveal a register of the men in your section. Choose which man you think is most suitable for the task. Now the screen switches to the humid heat of the Vietnamese jungle. Suddenly, you hear a noise! Was it a bird or perhaps an animal? The peasant stops and stands motionless knowing that he has given himself away. Unarmed, you move towards the noise and walk straight into the path of his gun. He aims and cocks the rifle, the hairs stand up on the back of your neck adrenaline pumping you're facing death. For what seems like an eternity he pauses, torturing you with time. Then with a smirk on his face, he pulls the trigger. You

buckle in the middle, expecting a thud, searing pain nothing but sure death. But the gun backfires, the VC falls to the ground. Cheating death, you spring on the stricken VC, quickly disarming this enemy you fight him to the death.

You stand in the forest facing the enemy. A lean, slight Vietcong, who looks like he hasn't eaten for days. But looks are deceptive and every blow from those bony hands and elbows, every kick to the groin and throat stings like a massive wasp. He's faster than you, but you're stronger and heavier and with joystick control you must advance and retreat by moving the joystick left and right. Wrenching the joystick diagonally upwards, sends your foot reaching towards the VC's head and every direct blow from your boot weakens this starving peasant. He retaliates with a blinding display of martial arts, a flurry of blows hitting your face, neck and torso. Quickly, you must recover, and by snapping the joystick to the sides and tapping the firebutton, your soldier punches back in anger. But again, the VC is there with an elbow to the eye socket. It's do or die time! You snap the joystick upwards and simultaneously hit the firebutton - your boot meets his face squarely and with a crunch of bone the VC drops to his knees in blinding agony.

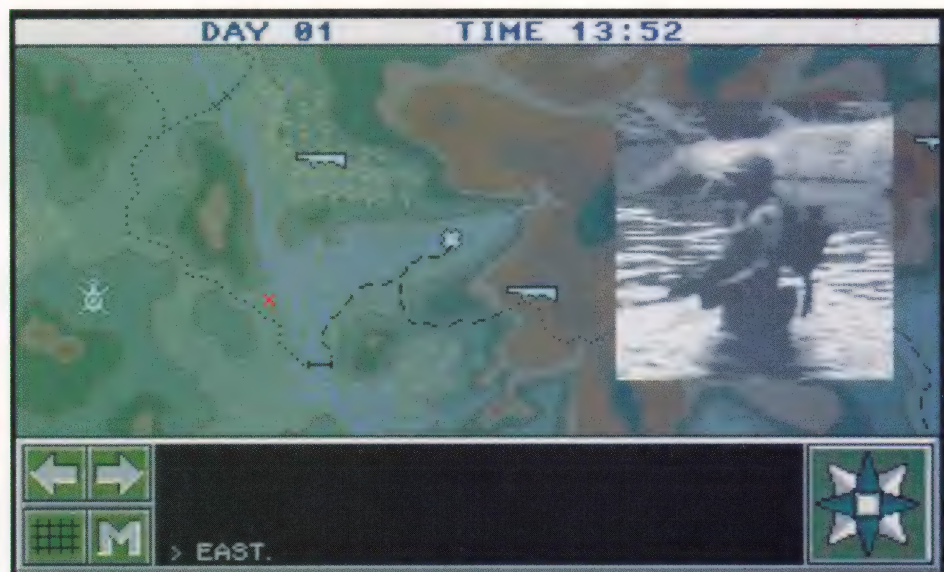
HARLING & COOKE

Unassuming game designer, Simon Cooke and graphic artist Ian Harling have taken the peril, terror and injustice portrayed in movies such as Apocalypse Now, Full Metal Jacket and Platoon for the subject of his first project, Lost Patrol. Recently, I tracked him down to one of the inner sanctums of the labyrinthian Ocean building, where he described the project: "Vietnam war films such as Apocalypse Now and Platoon were certainly inspirational in the design of Lost Patrol. But we wanted to interpret the war from a first-person perspective, and so in this chaotic war environment, the player is in

Originally billed as an unofficial sequel to their movie tie-in, Platoon, Ocean's Lost Patrol drops the player in the dangerous jungles of Vietnam. Only those with a double-sided disc drive will be able to load this demo. Set during the balmy June of 1969, you and your squad of six men have crash-landed 57 miles away from your original destination. As the leader, you must ensure that your men remain fit, healthy and as happy as possible as you yomp across the treacherous landscape. On the disk, you have one of the many sub-games that punctuate the gameplay, so load up, sit back, and experience the hell of 'Nam, as you fight a VC to the death...



This screen displays your men's morale.



All progress in the game is made via this scrolling map. Using a compass and pointer system, your men must be guided across the 58 miles between the crashed 'chopper and Du Hoc - but many dangers lie ahead.

PLEASE NOTE:

To run Lost Patrol, users with double-sided disk drives must copy all files from the "side2" folder onto a blank, standard-formatted disk, and then run the demo program from drive A: by double-clicking on the file labelled PATROL.PRG.

THE TEAM

Inspired by movies like *Apocalypse Now* and *Platoon*, Harling and Cooke have reproduced the horrors of Nam in *Lost Patrol*.



(Right) Programmer Simon Cooke. *Lost Patrol* is Simon's first commercial game project - not the easiest of introductory games to code!

(Left) Graphic artist Ian Harling was responsible for the stunning and atmospheric graphics which bring the horrors of Vietnam to our small screens.



control of his destiny and that of his men." There are many different aspects of modern warfare, how have they been interpreted in *Lost Patrol*? "This was the most treacherous and chaotic war of our time. During World War II, movies glamorized war and, with the use of stock characters, they were even used as propaganda. But in a more socially-aware and informed world, the likes of *Apocalypse Now* and *Platoon*, exposed both the physical and, perhaps even more disturbing, the psychological terrors. So I have tried to convey these psychological and moralistic traumas in *Lost Patrol*."

It was the war that never should have been, and for the conscripts, who had no choice but to go, there was no respite from the nightmare after the war, because they returned home to hostility, scorn and ridicule. How could such psychological trauma be interpreted in a computer game? Simon explained: "*Lost Patrol* is set in the jungles of Vietnam which was unbearably humid and the terrain must have been really hard going, and we've attempted to portray this in the game. In addition to the atmospheric backdrops", Cooke's interpretation goes much further than the cold-blooded, detached and, in this particular case, totally inappropriate practice of shoot'em-ups. Simon continued: "Another way of conveying this psychological trauma is in the questioning of villagers which is an aspect of strategy in the game. The ordinary villagers were caught in the conflict, often forced by both the VCs and U.S. troops to conspire against the enemy. Therefore, nobody can be trusted." The questioning scenes are rather distressing as you meet an old man, woman or a child, you have the choice of friendly questioning or beating it out of them: "Invariably the questioning gets round to finding out where the VCs are. The moralistic aspect comes down to the form of questioning you adopt. Friendly questioning will win the peasants over and they may offer you food and drink which is beneficial. But if they are not forced, they may not give you the correct information and so you

have to use your discretion. Of course, if you go around beating every peasant you meet, you will eventually degenerate into madness as your morale gets lower and lower."

LOST PATROL - THE WHOLE STORY

So *Lost Patrol* attempts to bring the terror of war to our ST screens by portraying both the physical and mental traumas of Nam. It comprises strategy, battle planning and various forms of highly original arcade play. Simon continues: "In the finished version, there's a map screen which gives your position, VC strongholds, as well as showing terrain detail, and you plot your progress with compass directions. During the course of duty, you must maintain your mens' morale and select them for various missions and duties." The more physical gameplay takes many forms some of which is totally original. Simon continued: "Suddenly, you will be faced by a section of VCs taking refuge in village ruins. You're outgunned ten to one and armed with machine gun and a limited amount of grenades, you must spray the platoon with gunfire and lob grenades until all are dead. Also, if you get separated from the section you might have to defend yourself against a lone VC in unarmed combat." Possibly one of the worst war experiences is to discover that you're in the middle of a minefield. Simon describes another aspect of the physical gameplay: "The platoon have wandered into a minefield and your task is to keep calm, get down on your hands and knees, uncover the mines and pick a safe route through the mines."

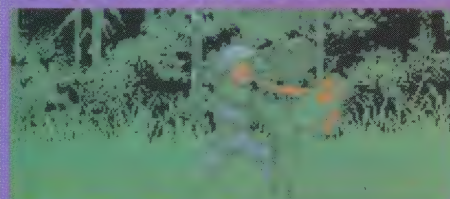
There have been a number of 'Nam' games which have attempted to portray the war, but with a combination of strategy and original battle gameplay, *Lost Patrol* has taken the theme many stages further. The game will be published by Ocean who promise an April release.

IT'S A LONG, LONG WAY HOME...

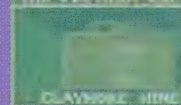
With 58 miles to safety, you are bound to engage the Viet-Cong many times. Armed with a handful of grenades and limited ammo - are you up to it?



(Above) As your weary party make their way through the treacherous Viet-Cong domain, they will often be picked off by solitary VCs. After a brief graphical interlude, showing off Ian's considerable talents, (below) a one-on-one beat'em-up ensues - a fight you must win or be left behind.



Though subtle in design, booby traps like this were responsible for thousands of U.S. casualties during the Vietnam war.



Landmines around 700 steel ball bearings, which upon detonation, are buried in a 25yd. square that can destroy an entire platoon.

Screens like this allow you to learn about the traps you are laying - traps that were responsible for 80% of the war's casualties.

*Please note that due to the late arrival of this item of software, all *Lost Patrol* screenshots are taken from the Amiga version of the game.

STATION GAMES DISK SPECIAL FEATURE

There can be few people who haven't heard of FTL's classic roleplaying game, **Dungeon Master**. Fanatics everywhere waited the arrival of the games follow-up, **Chaos Strikes Back**. Now it's here, many dungeoneers are encountering bloody battles with Chaos' minions. Like a knight on a white charger, Ed Penman has once again created the ultimate accessory, the **Chaos Editor**. Now, you can give yourself the upper hand. So, as Ed would say, "let's go and crack some skulls!"



Doors can be changed to suit yourself. For instance, here, a usually ornate, wooden door has been made into a gate, thus letting dungeoneers see what's behind it.

CHAOS EDITOR

Following in the footsteps of his **Dungeon Master Editor**, Ed Penman has finished his latest project, the **Chaos Strikes Back Editor**. Available early February, the new package costs £14.95 and not only includes the editor but also a book containing detailed maps, monster lists, spells and a whole list of tips.

The new editor has a wider range of functions than its predecessor, the **Dungeon Master Editor**, and for this reason it will only run in medium and high resolution modes.

FOUR TASKS

The **Chaos Editor** works by altering the save-game file created by **Chaos Strikes Back** and will allow users to perform four main tasks:

1. To alter the maps of each separate level, thus allowing players to create short-cuts and new passages.
2. To change the doors so that no keys are needed to open them.
3. To remove all of the secret walls in the dungeon, thus allowing access to hidden locations and objects.
4. To view and print the maps for each of the levels.

USER GUIDE

When the Editor has been loaded it will ask you to insert a **Chaos Strikes Back** save-game disk into the disk drive. After reading the data from the disk, the program will display the floorplan of level five - the beginning level.

Looking at the map, you should recognise where you begin in the game. To delete walls or add new passages, move the mouse pointer over the relevant square. Clicking the left mouse button will allow you to remove or

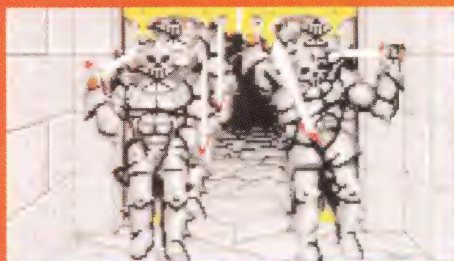
replace normal walls and passages. The right button will allow you to remove anything; but, be warned, **Chaos** is extremely sensitive to some alterations. It is advisable, therefore, to leave blue-hazes and trigger squares alone. In case you do remove something by mistake, **UNDO** will restore the most recent change.

By simply selecting the option from the menu-bar, changing doors is easy. This time, however, you have the option of what style of door to change them to. Ed has allowed you to choose between portcullises and doors; vertically or horizontally-opening gates; plain and ornate patterns - the choice is yours. Ed, however, was quick to point out that all doors are changed when this option is used, thus it is best not to use it too quickly or it could spoil your enjoyment of the game. Unfortunately, this function is not available on this demo, but seeing how there are only about three doors that need keys on level five, it's no great loss.

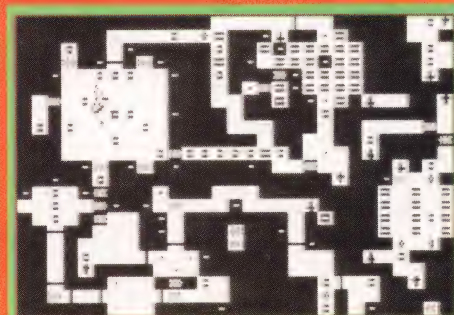
Secret walls often hold valuable items or provide useful escape routes. Ed has now allowed you to remove the secret walls from all of the levels or ones you specify. Again, for the purpose of this demo, you may only remove those on level five.

The print option on the menu-bar allows you to print maps of any of the ten levels. Unlike the DM editor, you have to specify which level you want to print, and each can be produced with or without a legend telling you what the symbols mean.

When I visited Ed, he seemed genuinely excited about his program and, having seen the power of the Editor, I can see why. But don't just take our word, load up the demo version on the cover disk and try it for yourself. On the disk, you should notice a **Chaos** save-game, this file contains Ed's personal champions, each of whom are pretty strong. Meanwhile, courtesy of Alex Simmons, we've also provided you with a set of portraits of the **Dungeon Crew**.

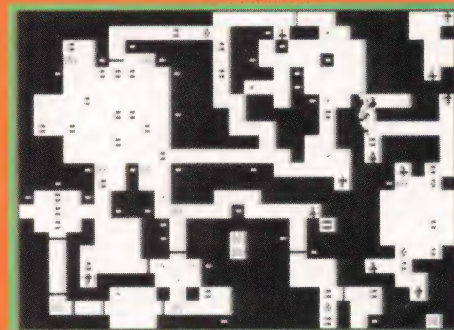


As you can see, it is advisable to look behind barriers before you open them. Ouch!



DUNGEON BLUEPRINTS

After the enormous success of their **Dungeon Master Editor**, Softex are proud to announce the release of the **Chaos Editor**. For **Dungeon** insomniacs everywhere, we present this one-level taster.



(Left) Here we see the starting level as most players find it. However, after using the editor, dungeoneers may gain access to previously secret areas (Above).

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Dungeons & Disk Drives

Okay fans, let's stop fighting it and give in. The postbag is bursting at the seams with Chaos Save disks from a thousand Dungeoneers all claiming the title of being first to finish the mega-game, so let's see what the fuss is all about.

All 'professional' D.M. fans will probably have finished CHAOS by now - except of course for the poor Dungeon Crew who have more enthusiasm than sense of direction! Perhaps now is the time to reflect on the orgy of fun and destruction that you have just undergone and think - was it worth the wait? Was it the sequel that we all hoped it would be? We here in the Dungeon are all confirmed addicts so it's difficult for us to be objective. It must be said that the game has some points for which it could be criticised. It certainly does have a naughty tendency to crash when you least expect it, which knowing how painstaking FTL can be, certainly surprised us. Some letter writers expressed disappointment, saying that it was too easy. Some said the monsters weren't strong enough - tell that to the Stone Golem who keeps beating-up the Troll!

However there is no doubt in my mind which aspect of the game was the greatest success. It was the random element which FTL built in. This means that no two dungeons are exactly the

same and it enables you to experience incidents which won't happen in your friend's game. For this reason it's unlikely that you will have seen the dangerous monster that we found in our Dungeon - THE MUMMY DUCK! Yep, that's what I said. Forget your Dragons and Golems, we've met the nastiest 'mother' of them all.

The old clock was striking 2am as the Dungeon Crew, tired and worn, stood in the fading torchlight before yet another a black door. Lying in the stairway beneath the corridor of the Chaos Knights, the closed door drew us like a magnet into the shadow of its portals. We should have turned for home while we still had the strength, but the feeling that we were so close to something important held us back. Key inserted, we each tightened our grip on our weapons and waited nervously as the door clanked open. Out of the gloom and into the corridor stepped a solitary mummy. The Troll laughed and lunged forward to dispatch this simple creature with his Executioner Axe. Six axe chops

later, the stupid mummy was still standing - and advancing! Sensing a problem, but still unworried, we moved to a safe position with our backs to the staircase and continued hacking. As time wore on, and with the Dragon and the Troll's strength beginning to ebb away, I decided to end this foolishness and ordered Edna to get rid of the pest with a fireball. Flashing over the heads of the front rank, the fireball reached the tattered heap of bandages and then disappeared through the wall behind him - The MUMMY DUCKED!

For a moment there was a shocked silence and then, as the Dragon turned to stare at me open-mouthed, the fireball returned with a roar through the wall to our right and enveloped us in flames.

It was a beaten Crew which retreated in panic up the stairs and ran for home. Later, as we lay bruised and shocked in the safety of the ST Dungeon, we wondered if we should tell others of what happened to us. Would they believe that the Mummy Ducked? Would they believe the fireball returned through a solid wall? And would they believe that when the Mummy ducked - I swear I saw him wink!

Have you a tale to tell? What fiendish trick of chance brought your champions to their knees. Make the Troll's day and write and let him know what he was lucky to miss.

We would like to thank all of you who have written to the Dungeon. The amount of mail is both flattering and terrifying! There isn't the room to reply to you all in the column so do remember to send a S.A.E or it's into the Troll's moat for the unlucky ones. I'm especially sorry that I can't reply to all our overseas writers, so why not include an International Postage Voucher? You can be assured that all your letters are carefully read and argued over. Keep writing, there is still room in the moat for a few more tons.



Cupid's arrows are the items needed to befriend the Unicorn. Fly swift and true!

TROLL LETTERS

A Watery Grave for the Cistern Horrors

Greetings Foul Troll, here's a tip for fighting the water monsters in the Chaos Cistern Chamber. Try and get them to attack you across a grating in the floor and you'll find that they will drain away.

Chris Vaughan, Cardiff

Ugh! I hate Water Monsters most of all. Watching them slurp across the floor reminds me of bath night. Come to think of it, it's almost bath time now. When is Easter this year?

Enabling the Debugging Tool in the Kings Quests Series

If you load any of the Kings Quest games (1 to 4) and then hold the Alt - D buttons down you get the version number. Press the Return button and you get another message. Press it a third time and you return to the game prompt, but now you have enabled the DEBUG mode for the room you are in. The room number will now be displayed at the bottom of the screen.

If you press Alt - D again and then type TP and press Return, you will be asked 'What room number?'. You can now type in a room number and 'BINGO' you will be transported there, (very useful for jumping tricky bits). You can find the room numbers by typing the command 'SHOW VAR'. You can also find out about objects by typing SHOW <object> (e.g. SHOW KNIFE) and when you have the picture of the object on the screen type SHOW VAR.

I find your page very helpful and hope you get more space.

Ray Kenny, High Wycombe

Well! I'll be washed-down with a damp J Cloth. So that's how it's done. I'll bet sneaky Boy-Blunder has known that trick all along and that's how he has

been beating the Dungeon Crew to the solutions each time. I'm so mad I could bite lumps out of my club. Just wait till he comes swanning around here next time, I'll give him an Alternate keystroke that will make his eyeballs spin! (Now look here, greebo, I can can finish a Sierra game before you've even figured out which way up the disk goes. So there! Ed.)

Fusing the Crystals in Zak McKracken

Trolley-Baby, how do you fuse together the two parts of the yellow crystal. I think it takes place in London. Which reminds me, what is Stonehenge doing outside Heathrow?

The TRAMP, London

To do this you must place the two pieces on the altar at Stonehenge and then Annie must read the magic scroll which comes from a cave in Peru. Lightning also plays its part and this is attracted with the metal flagpole which you must use with the altar stone.

The English Tourist Board has been spreading the story that Stonehenge is just outside Heathrow to convince the Yankee visitors to move out of London for a change. I note that you are a tramp. Did I tell you that I went for a tramp in the woods once? Unfortunately he got away!

Chaos Strikes Back - With a Wet Lettuce!!

December 89, Chaos is released. Kids sent to bed early, lights turned down, beer cans opened, pencils ready to take notes as me and the wife prepared for all hell to break loose.

Four weeks later, our fears, expectations and enjoyment were shattered - the game was over. The four pieces of corbum were destroyed, Chaos was gone and order was restored. I was speechless, shocked. After 5 minutes I managed to utter five words:- 'What a load of C....!!'

The game crashed my ST twice and occasionally asked me to insert the game disk when the mouse keys were not even being touched. Am I the ultimate RPG player or has FTL lost the spark that gave us Dungeon Master?

Throughout the game Lord Chaos appeared for about one minute. The monsters ambled around in one's and two's. Countless dragons became hero food. 36 knights left enough surplus armour to build a fleet of Metros. Worm Rounds were so plentiful that we left them on the floor to rot. The final picture of Lord Order thanking us, was on the screen long enough to blink and that was it. What went wrong? My wife is in tears and the dog has left home. Is my disk faulty or have you, like me, discovered that the game is a good learner for those wishing to play Dungeon Master?

Ian Thomson, Bamber Bridge

Well, well, a voice of dissent amongst the ranks. Now let me get this straight. After four weeks of solid playing, you decided it was a load of rubbish! Tell me, what other load of rubbish have you played for four weeks on the trot? You don't also watch 'Neighbours' do you?

Okay, let's play at Devil's Advocate and look at the game through uncharitable eyes. Yes, it does crash when it oughtn't. I suspect that we are all partly to blame for that. Game testing is the last and most boring part of a game's development and I suspect that the pressure FTL were under to release the game made them cut a few corners. A pity, but not something which should be held against them too harshly as apart from the rare reboot, it doesn't damage the game position.

The strength of the monsters is another difficult question. If you have been a determined player it's possible that your starting position might be stronger than FTL reckoned on - compare your men with those available from the Prison. Perhaps FTL should have put a limit on your starting capabilities to even things up, but no doubt many users would have screamed blue murder about that as well. There is also



Don't worry about paying your phone bill. These guys aren't interested in your money.



Sierra's Space Quest III is one of their finest. We found it pretty easy but you silly humans are still getting stuck.

the problem that you have grown wise in *Dungeon Lore* and it is now not so easy to fool you. Remember the problem that one illusion wall caused in *D.M.* and compare that with the multitude of illusions in *Chaos*.

There is also the fact that the game will allow you to complete the task without necessarily solving all of the puzzles. It is possible to miss out large sections of the dungeon and still finish the quest. This was probably included to ensure that some random setup did not make some games impossible.

Still, didn't your Mum tell you not to gobble all of your cake at once or else you would feel sick afterwards? I suspect that you have the same feeling that kids have on Christmas afternoon. Even after a morning of present opening, there is still that feeling of: 'Is that all I got?'

Fast Moves in Dungeon Master

I think I have made a minor discovery in *Dungeon Master*, your Trolly Majesty. I have a party of two. Olaf the Viking and Darkie the Laughing Goddess. Olaf found the 'Mace of Order' and thought it would do a great deal of damage, but when he became disappointed with it he thought to throw it away.

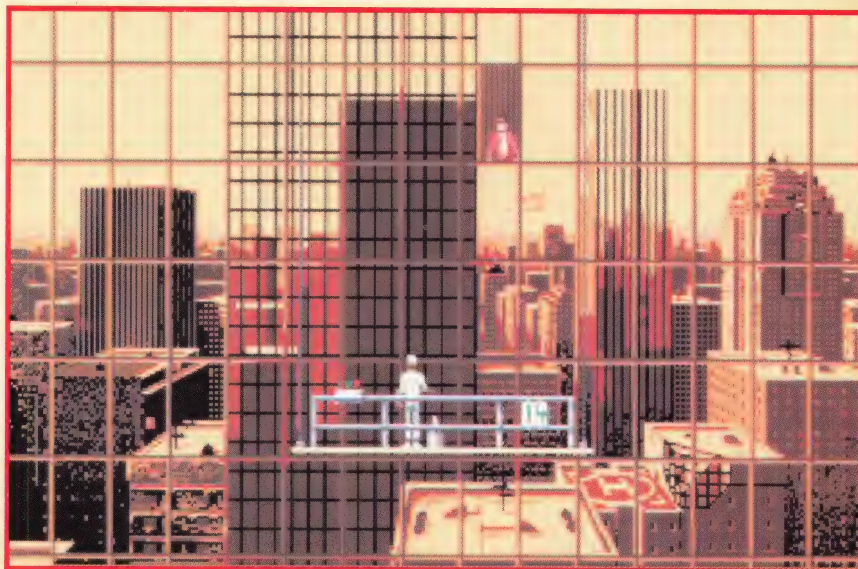
'No', said Darkie, 'didn't you notice you walked quicker when you held the Mace? Just hold it when you are walking and change weapons when you enter combat'. She was right. Have you tried it?

I think your column is the best and should be expanded. Why not teach Mitch and the Witch to help? Best wishes from the Land of the Trolls.

Hans Hagenstrom, Sweden

I thought she was going to tell him the old joke: 'Is that the Mace of Order you've got in your pocket - or are you just pleased to see me?' Well we've tried

The high-rise architecture you're used to is a far cry from the wierd and wonderful surroundings you're likely to encounter within the realms of *Time Travellers - Future Wars*.



your clue and yes I think you are right. Tell me, does everyone in Sweden sound like the cook from the Muppet Show?

Love at First Flight in Kings Quest IV

How can you catch the Unicorn - I have the bridle? I know you are a lousy Troll, but if you don't help us I will send the pictures of you and the sheep to a well known newspaper!

Bill and Ben, Nr. Nuneaton

Love makes fools of us all and that's especially true in your case. Didn't you notice Cupid going for a swim in the pool? Being thieving humans, I'm surprised you didn't rush in (being careful of the nasty water) to steal his bow and arrows. One arrow in the unicorn's heart and it will love you forever. Of course you'll no doubt repay the love of this beautiful creature by handing it

over to the evil Queen. Typical humans!

And not only are you lacking in the milk of human kindness, your eyesight is failing. They ain't sheep, they're Billy Goat Gruffs.

Future Wars

After buying *Future Wars* and expertly succeeding in entering the office block and dousing my boss with water, I could hardly believe how much fun I was having. Fifteen pounds well spent I thought. That was before entering the library. Since then I have spent countless nights studying the military map and a piece of modern art, trying to read the books or open cupboards. All to no avail. Oh I did find a used typewriter (Wow!) and a blank piece of paper (oooooh!) Other items include a flag, key, insecticide and a plastic bin-bag (Aaaargh!)

G. Broadway, Hampshire

If you spent countless nights studying the military map - how come you didn't notice that it's is covered in flags? How come you missed the fact that there is a little, lonely hole in the map? Get stuck in stupid!!

Finally to end this orgy of *D.M.* something to whet your appetite. Don't write angry letters if the Crew doesn't manage to pull it off, but we are trying VERY HARD to get an exclusive interview with a very important person behind the *FTL* Dungeon. Watch this space, soon...

Send your letters with a S.A.E to:-

**The TROLL
C/O The Dungeon
29, Blackthorn Drive
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Chaos must have been the most anticipated ST game ever. However, many of you expressed disappointment with the lack of new monsters. Bet you wouldn't say it to this fellow's face.

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ALL SHOPS ARE INDEPENDENT
BARGAIN SOFTWARE, 60 BOSTON ROAD, LONDON W7 3TR

Although *Crackdown* is a very close conversion of the Sega coin-op, it is by no means a perfect game. The frenetic blast'n'run action is initially great fun, and planting bombs in the two-player mode brings it to life even more. However, one of the game's major shortcomings is that lives are often lost when there is nothing you can do about it. To kill one of the enemy, you must be accurately lined up with them and, seven times out of ten, it is them who is on target. That said, *Crackdown* is a playable, if undemanding, little game and fans of the coin-op will love it.

JS

"Names obviously play a big part in your future career. When christened Shirley Crabtree, it was obvious Shirl would have to become Big Daddy the wrestler to avoid being teased. So what to do with Ben Breaker and Andy Attacker, the stars of U.S. Gold's latest coin-op conversion - *Crackdown*."

CRACKDOWN

US GOLD (£19.99)

This time last year, Arc Developments surprised us all when they performed what was previously believed to be impossible. Given the unenviable task of converting Capcom's graphically superb and multi mega-byte coin-op, *Forgotten Worlds*, the team worked away and somehow managed to squeeze as many of the graphics and levels from the breath-taking coin-op into the humble ST. Thus, when U.S. Gold secured the rights to convert another spectacular coin-op, this time Sega's *Crackdown*, they knew just the team for the job. Eight months after the work began, we can now enjoy the fruits of their labours. *Crackdown* is a one or two-player shoot'em-up-cum-maze game, along the lines of the ageing Atari game, *Berzerk* (remember that?). An evil scientist, known only as Dr. K has holed himself up in a deserted city and has been working solidly on perfecting a new race of humanoids. Half man, half machine, his bio-mechanical warriors now patrol his territory, killing unwanted visitors. Information received from the area has revealed that Dr. K is, in fact, about to unleash his cyborg creations in mass attacks against strategic sites and cities -

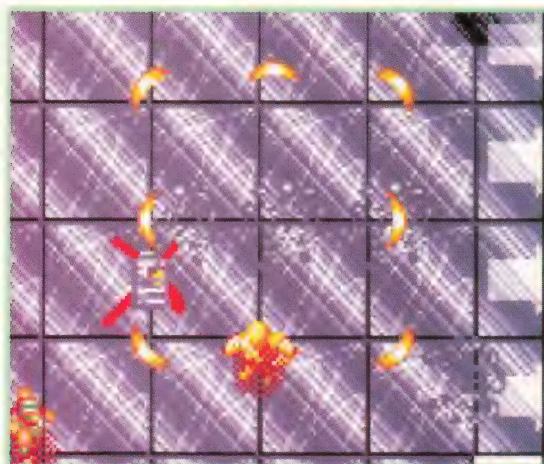


As you progress through the sixteen levels that make up K's lair, the enemy guards get stranger. Here, we see Ben and Andy attacked by what appear to be mutant apes. Unlike the other guards, they aren't armed, but they are just as deadly.

what's more, judging by sightings of numerous new warriors and mutations, his fiendish plan is nearly ready. A decision was taken: two of the FBI's best men would be deposited into the run-down city that now doubled as K's lair, and, once in, must plant explosives at structural weak points within the city. In addition, to make sure the menace is really over, they must then make their way into K's lair and end his existence forthwith.

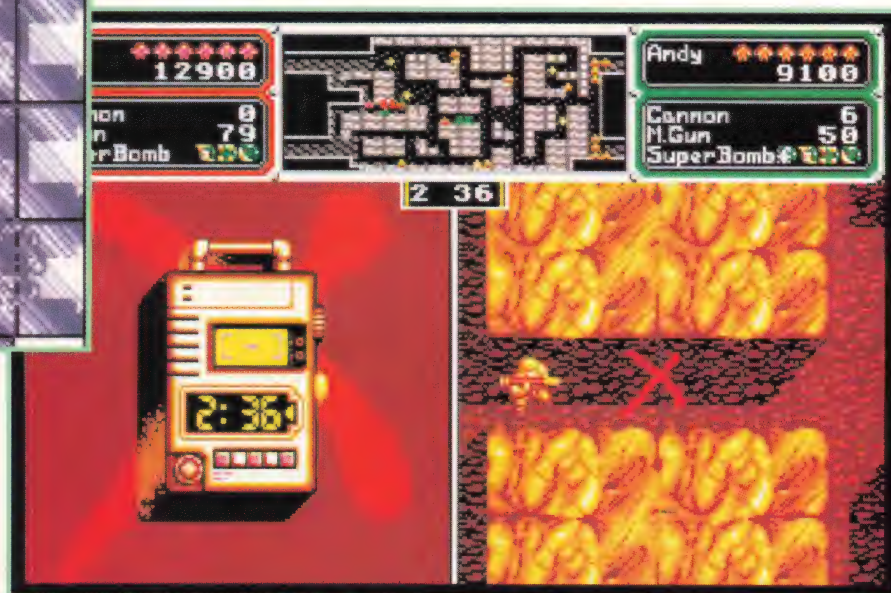
Adopting the role of one of the two FBI men - Andy Attacker or Ben Breaker - you

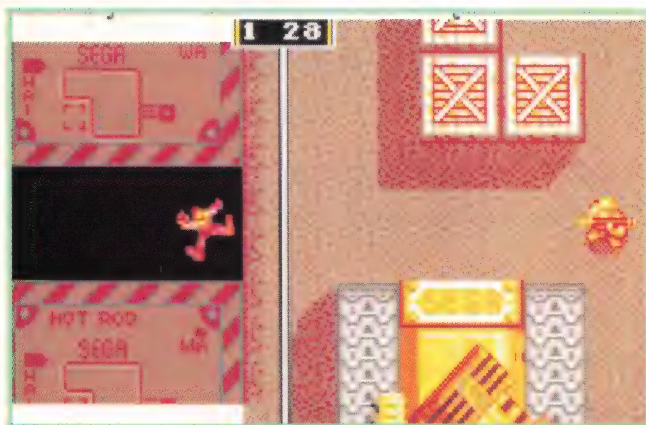
are given a limited amount of time in which to scour the level and find the red crosses that mark where the bombs should be planted. The main play area is split into five sections: two scrolling play areas, in which the two characters' exploits are shown; a score box and inventory panel for each agent; and, finally, a small radar scanner that depicts the whereabouts of K's warrior machines. The joystick is used to control either Ben or Andy, with the directional controls guiding them through the maze-like corridors and streets of K's lair, and the firebutton



By pressing either the Caps Lock or the Alt key, the two agents can throw one of their 'super bombs'. Once thrown, they explode, causing the screen to shudder and killing anything remotely alien within the vicinity.

Once a bomb has been placed, you are given a quick glimpse of the set explosive and a reminder that time is running out.





As you advance towards Dr. K, your travels will see you crossing roof tops, junk yards and even lava pools. These ground-based hazards can prove every bit as hazardous as the enemy's fire, and lives can be lost if you stumble into a gaping lift shaft or if the seemingly safe bridge you are crossing disappears from beneath your feet.

Extra weapons can be picked up from the pink pads that are dotted throughout the levels. Unfortunately, your new-found weapons don't last for long, so your supplies must be constantly topped up.

Crackdown seems to be a combination of two types of game. While there are definitely elements of Gauntlet, it is most similar to Alien Syndrome. This isn't to say that Crackdown is poor in comparison, in fact, the game itself is both enjoyable and addictive, although the many levels are basically identical to each other. The graphics are small but effective, the maps have been well thought out and nicely detailed. The sound, both musically and effects-wise, has been well catered for and includes some nice effects here and there. Although I enjoyed Crackdown, the levels seemed all too similar to each other and therefore became boring after a while. Overall, not a bad effort and worth taking a look at.

SW

releasing a burst of fire from their guns - in addition, as a much-needed back up, Ben and Andy also carry a limited supply of 'super bombs', and these are activated via the keyboard and result in the death of any enemy on the screen at the time of detonation. Plugging the many guards whittles away your already limited supply of ammunition, but extra caches can be collected by passing over the handy weapon points that are dotted throughout the levels. Each one houses a different weapon, but only lasts a short time, and

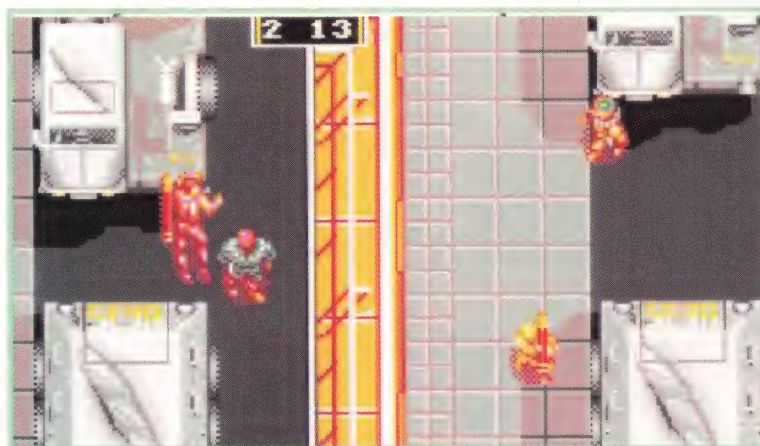


must be topped up constantly. All is not lost if your supplies are exhausted, though, both Ben and Andy are skilled in hand-to-hand combat - providing you can get past the enemy fire to your foe, that is!

As they explore the area, they are instantly attacked by the bio-mechanical warriors, and these robots must be shot before they get a chance to return fire. Contact with one of the enemy's bullets means instant death for one of our heroes, and results in the loss of one of his five lives - luckily, though, the game has retained the 'credit' system of the coin-op,

and you are given three more chances to start from where you lost your last life. As mentioned, the places where the bombs should be laid are marked by a large, red cross. To begin with, each level requires three bombs to be placed, but as you get deeper in to the sixteen levels that comprise K's lair, you will be required to lay a few extra explosives. Once a sufficient number of bombs have been primed, a message requesting you to proceed to the next stage will appear, and you must exit via the right-hand side of the screen to the next level.

STA



Poor old Ben is on the wrong end of a bullet, and collapses to the ground as he loses one of his five lives. Luckily, he has got three credits stowed away, and with K's forces getting stronger with each stage, he'll need them.

STA
Rating
74%

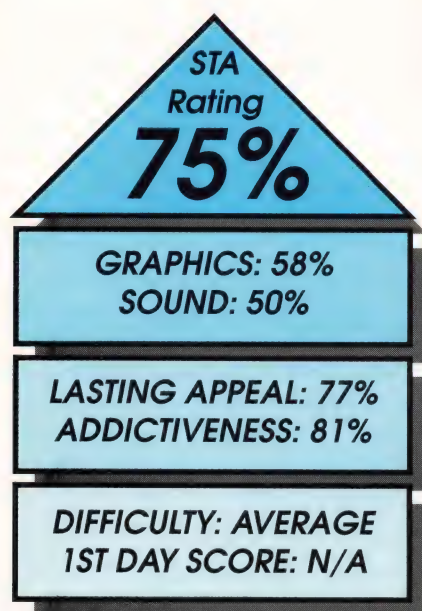
GRAPHICS: 60%
SOUND: 60%

LASTING APPEAL: 72%
ADDICTIVENESS: 77%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

Having never seen the Crackdown coin-op, I can't say whether or not this is a close conversion. Personally, I found the game a cross between Alien Syndrome and Gauntlet. Graphically, the game is highly polished; the spited well animated and colour has been used to good effect. I particularly liked the way in which two players could play simultaneously. Personally, I liked the sound effects, even though there was little that was new. Having said that, Crackdown isn't the type of game that I'd play over and over again. At the end of the day, Crackdown is a something and nothing game. Its initial appeal is good but I would have to question the longevity.

NC



Christmas isn't only a time for eating, drinking and making merry. Oh no, every Christmas, after the turkey and the Queen's speech, the board games are inevitably brought out of a cluttered cupboard. After a quick dusting down, the ominous task of recruiting players begins. It's usually quite easy to find players willing to participate in a round of Monopoly or Cluedo but, when Risk emerges, closet megalomaniacs become a little thin on the ground.

That's not to say that Risk is a tedious game. On the contrary, when played with the right opponents, the game can be quite enthralling. Having questioned various persons in the office, I have come to the conclusion that it's the seemingly complex nature of the game that puts players off. This fear is quite unfounded. Unlike its contemporaries, the rules of Risk are quite simple and extremely logical.

Leisure Genius's adaptation of Parker Brother's Risk should go a long way to solving the player shortage. Up to six people can participate in the computer version, any number of which may be computer-controlled. There are four variations

I can't honestly say that I have ever played the board game of Risk but, after seeing the computer version, I now realise what I have been missing. The game's presentation is excellent, with a perfect, graphical representation of the world that soon becomes a mass of bright colours as players battle it out for world domination. Although the sound is a little sparse it is somewhat superfluous in this type of game and certainly not essential to the gameplay. Up to six players can participate as well as computer opponents if need be. The computer plays very well indeed and can prove hard to beat at times. Although I wouldn't recommend it to ardent shoot-'em-up fans, Risk is an excellent and enjoyable, game.

SW

"There's no set formula for ruling the world. Some take North America, others prefer Oceania. Personally, I rather fancy Kamchatka."

RISK

LEISURE GENIUS (£19.95)



Up to six players may compete for global domination. Here we see that someone is out to conquer the Oceanic continent. Doing so will ensure him an extra four armies.

on the full game, each of which differs slightly. Before the game commences each player is allocated a number of armies then, in turn, they must place their armies on the map claiming a territory.

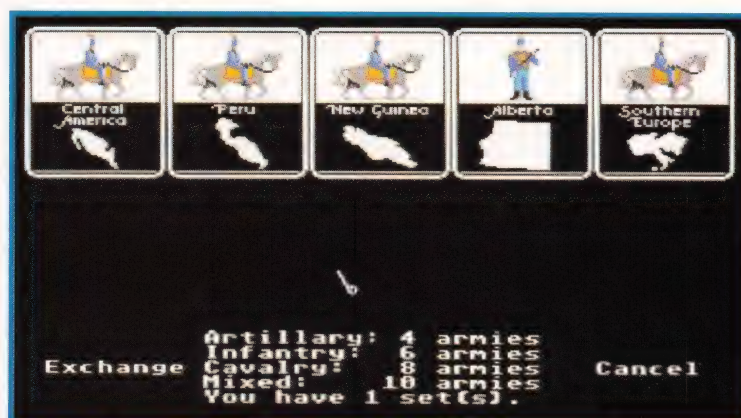
As play progresses, each player will have the opportunity to declare war on his opponents. Strategy and tactics come into play here as extra armies are gained by invading continents. When an attack is launched, the aggressor will, depending on the size of his army, have the choice of rolling up to three dice. The defending army must throw a number higher than

the attacker's highest score in order to repel the invading force. Battles continue until the attacking player decides to end his turn. Should he do so having invaded a territory, he will receive a Risk card.

On each Risk card appears an infantryman, an artillery battalion or a cavalry unit. When a player has collected a set of three cards, he may trade them in for extra army units. Of course, the winner of the game is the player who holds all of the territories and so has achieved global domination.

STA

Collecting Risk cards will ensure a bonus of yet more armies. This player appears to have been quite busy, judging from his collection of cards.



Leisure Genius have captured all the vital elements of Risk. Thanks to the option allowing you to choose the skill of the computer opponents, I can now have a decent game without having to wake up fellow players. The game's sound effects are rather bland, I would have liked to hear the odd war cry and explosion; instead, the obligatory bleeps confirm moves. The graphics, meanwhile, are crisply drawn yet nicely uncluttered. As for the gameplay, you either love it or hate it. Personally, I really enjoyed this game. Many board game adaptations fall flat on their face due to uninteresting gameplay and short-term appeal. Risk has avoided all the pitfalls and is a first-rate conversion.

NC

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Having reached the enemy base, you must free the terrified hostages. Beware, however, of the guerillas who seem to pop up (or down) in the most unlikely places.



STA Rating 76%
GRAPHICS: 73% SOUND: 60%
LASTING APPEAL: 74% ADDICTIVENESS: 80%
DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD 1ST DAY SCORE: 76053

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT

*"Roy Adams is back! It's been three years since he last saw active service but, due to a delicate hostage situation, he's been called up.
Operation initiated."*

— — — — — OCEAN (£19.95) — — — — —

The Uzi-mounted cabinet drew games-players' attention, while the violent but compelling gameplay managed to keep them coming back for more. Hailed as a classic, Operation Wolf soon became a firm favourite with the arcade aficionados. However, many players felt that the game failed to encompass what many were crying out for - simultaneous action. Tatio silenced any would-be critics by announcing the game's follow-up. The two-player, Operation Thunderbolt was soon released

to the expectant public. Now, thanks to Mancurian software giants, Ocean, both you and a friend have the chance to wreak havoc with an Uzi.

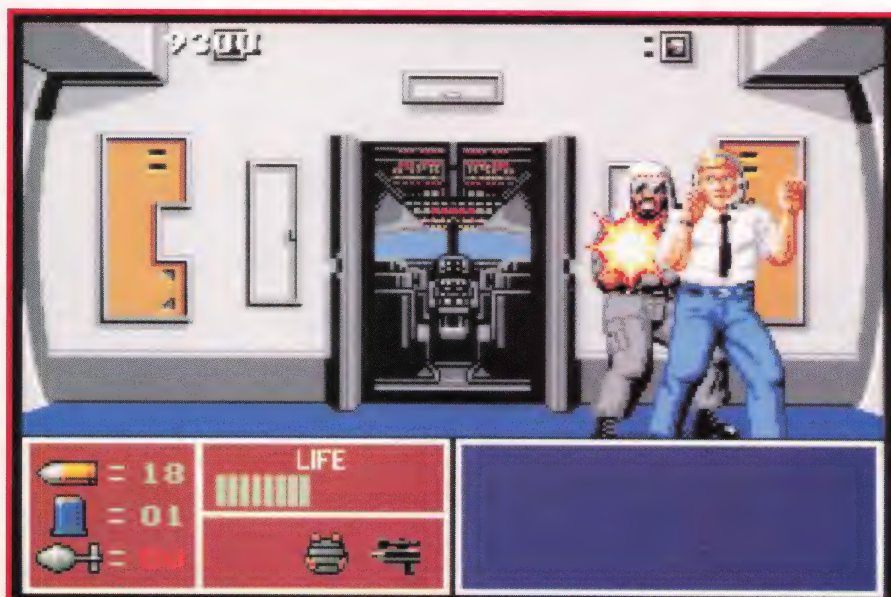
Three years after the Operation Wolf Mission, Roy Adams is back. Apparently a DC10 airliner was hijacked while on its way from Paris to Boston. Fanatical Arab guerillas took control of flight 102 and ordered the captain to fly towards Africa. They forced the plane to land in Kalubya and then began to issue their demands. Of course, it's a delicate situation; the government don't want to bow down to the

terrorists but they do want the hostages rescued. A crack team is needed to storm the terrorists' base and rescue the innocent victims. As the leader of the successful Operation Wolf hostage mission, you are called up to head the team. It's decided that a small team would be more effective than a whole battalion. So, teaming up with your long-term buddy, Hardy Jones, you head out to the tarmac and the awaiting plane - operation initiated!

Like its coin-op parent, two players may simultaneously play Operation Thunderbolt. The mouse is the preferred

After the highly successful Operation Wolf comes Operation Thunderbolt. Basically more of the same, the sequel has more levels to play and a great deal more cannon fodder. The purpose of the game is essentially the same - shoot the hell out of anyone who gets in your way, taking care not to harm the hostages, of course. The graphics are excellent and extremely well animated, the sound also being of a high quality, with digitized speech and a racy tune that keeps your heart thumping. The action gets very tense very quickly - perhaps a little too quickly. If you have Operation Wolf then it may be worth taking a peek at this one before you buy. Otherwise, Operation Thunderbolt should not be missed.

SW



Having stormed the plane, you must finish off the last terrorist before he disposes of your pilot.

If you ever wondered what that funny mouse thing that came with your ST was for, you'll find out when you play *Op Thunderbolt*. Like its highly successful forerunner, there's nothing subtle about the gameplay. But in true arcade style, you are constantly bombarded with enemy attack until your finger-clicking finger feels like its clicked its last click and your brain's crying out, 'No more, no more!' The graphics are big and bold and are drawn and animated to arcade standard and, when bullet hits target, a dramatic death or explosion adds to the appreciation of the game. It's bloomin' hard work, but it's highly entertaining stuff and explosive action all the way - state-of-the-art arcade gameplay and a must for real arcade fans!

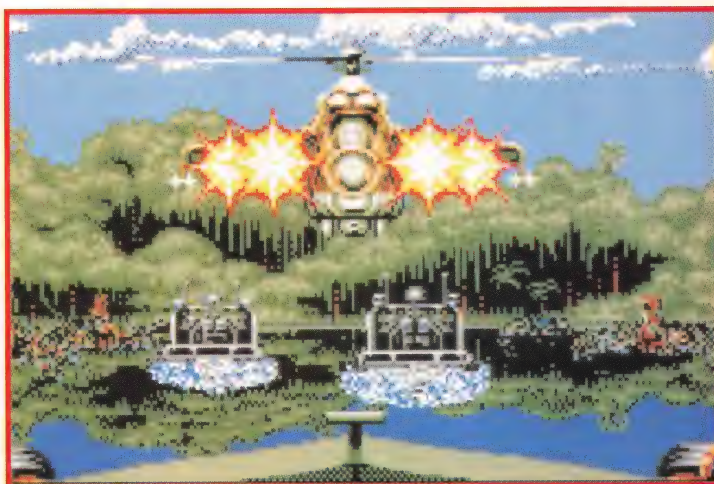
JS

control medium, but the game also allows for joysticks to be used instead. One of the main faults with the conversion of *Operation Wolf* was the constant disk swapping. Happily, the programmers have rectified this unnecessary annoyance and exchanging disks in *Thunderbolt* has been cut down to a minimum.

The game is split into eight stages. As the action begins players find themselves with a limited amount of bullets and rocket grenades. Of course, as you haphazardly blow the enemy away, your ammunition will rapidly become depleted. To remedy this, supply crates will be parachuted in. Shooting the boxes will release either extra ammunition or one-off items such as body armour or laser sights.

The action begins on the road heading towards the enemy base. Carefully picking your targets you must reach the enemy village in order to rendezvous with a spy who has vital information. Having learned the location of the enemy ammunition cache you must battle your way through the guerilla-infested town. Rocket launch-

Making good your escape from the enemy base, you are intercepted by an enemy task force. A huge helicopter gunship hovers above you. Carefully taking aim, you launch off a rocket.



ers, armoured tanks, helicopters and gun emplacements all attempt to gun you down, but should you make it to the ammo-dump you may restock your depleted rations. Stealing a jeep, you head for the guerillas' secret base. En route you'll be attacked by more helicopters, gunships, jeeps and even enemy jets. Arriving at the base camp, your orders are to free the hostages. Cell doors can be recognized by the heavy-duty padlocks that adorn them. A well-aimed shot will destroy the locks, thus opening the doors allowing the prisoners to run free. Borrowing a boat you must make your

way to the enemy headquarters. Once again, your opponents employ all the military hardware they have in an attempt to halt you in your tracks. However, when you finally reach the other side of the river, you stumble upon the H.Q.. Again, you must rescue more hostages before obtaining a means of transportation home. Finally, once you've boarded the airliner you must make your way to the cockpit. The last showdown is with a terrorist who uses the pilot as a shield. Pin-point aim is required in order to dispose of the menace and secure your flight home.

STA



Things really start to heat up on the second level: tanks, choppers, gun emplacements and countless soldiers are all out to put a stop to the mission.

Operation Thunderbolt is a natural progression from the immensely popular *Operation Wolf*. To be honest, apart from the simultaneous two-player mode, the game offers very little that's new. Then again, why bother changing a winning formula? Graphically, the game features big, bright and bold sprites which are well coloured and nicely animated. The game's sound is also very similar to that of its predecessor; I particularly liked the sampled speech. The gameplay has been improved. The annoying juggling of disks has been cut right down and the two-player mode really makes for exciting play. Overall, Ocean's *Operation Thunderbolt* is a great blow'em-away-style game that offers a real challenge.

NC



The enemy H.Q. is no place for the faint-hearted. Still, there are yet more hostages to liberate before the mission can be completed.

LOST DUTCHMAN MINE

STA
Rating
65%

GRAPHICS: 58%
SOUND: 55%

LASTING APPEAL: 67%
ADDICTIVENESS: 65%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

Howdy, old timer. Welcome to the small town of Goldfield, situated deep in the vast and rugged Superstition Mountains of Arizona. The year is 1883 and the American gold rush is well and truly on. There is an abundance of mines around the town, but rumour has it that an old prospector named Jacob Waltz, stumbled across a huge mine in which a knife was the only instrument needed to extract the precious metal. Unfortunately, the German prospector died in October 1881. No one knows of the location of his fabulous mine, but one clue is that it is situated under a pointed peak. The local townsfolk believe the peak to be that of Weaver's Needle, but nobody knows for sure. Numerous claims on the mine have been made, but none of them have proved genuine. Now you've caught gold fever, can you locate the Lost Dutchman Mine?

At the outset of the game you only have a modest sum of money to your name. Careless prospectors would bid their dollars against Dapper Dan, the local card shark. However, you decide to reserve that pleasure for later and head to the local mercantile in order to stock up with tools and provisions. Heading for the

To begin with, Lost Dutchman Mine is a joy to play, and is great fun if you just want to explore the depths of a deserted mine or maybe fish from the river's seemingly endless supply of tiddlers. The game is well presented, and the graphics and sound have been produced to a high standard, but after a few attempts at locating the legendary mine. I found it became rather monotonous. A good game to begin with, but rapidly loses its lasting appeal.

SW

"Well I'll be hog-swoggled, there be gold in them thar hills! No yellow-bellied varmit's gonna stop me from getting my hands on them nuggets."

MAGNETIC IMAGES (£19.95)

The Mercantile is the store from which you must collect all your necessary equipment.



I liked Lost Dutchman Mine. Graphically, the game is well presented. The character sprites are realistically drawn and animated, while the backdrops reflect the arid ruggedness of the Arizona desert. I did feel that the actual screen area was a little small, but this didn't detract from the overall enjoyment of the game. The sound effects proved to be a little sparse and basic - still, the inclusion of a digitized cockerel amused me. The gameplay proved to be a subtle strategy and arcade action. However, at the end of the day, although I really enjoyed the game I am left wondering whether it will appeal to the masses.

NC

river, you decide to pan for gold before stopping for a bite of lunch. Panning isn't a very profitable pastime - your visit to the local Assay Office confirms this, at least you've enough money to buy more equipment.

Excavating mines proves much more profitable. But beware, bandits and Indians roam the rugged countryside and if you haven't thought to bring a gun along then you'd best kiss goodbye to the day's spoils. Watch out, too, for rattlesnakes. Their bite can prove fatal if you don't reach the town physician in time. Of

course, as you progress, you'll want to buy mules to carry your equipment, and no doubt you'll also locate some of the maps which give clues to the lost mine's exact location. Who knows, you may even strike it rich!

Your character is controlled via the joystick, but the mouse is also employed in the manipulation of various icons and status read-outs which are found at the bottom portion of the screen. Players will have to keep a constant watch on their status to succeed. After all, we don't want the little fellow to waste away, do we?

ST



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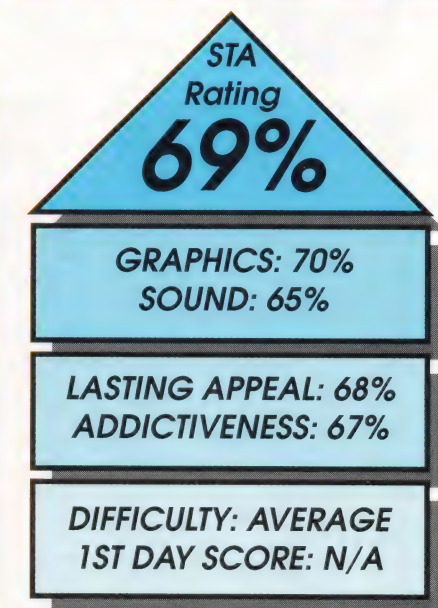
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On selecting a hole, you will be treated to a bird's-eye view of the entire course along with trees, bunkers and lakes. These may be recalled at any time during play.



Jack Nicklaus' Championship Golf offers 18 of the best courses from all around the world. A new player can select from either Jack's Greatest 18, Castle Pines GC or Desert Mountain GC. You are then required to select skins or stroke play. Skins allows you to play a match in a more or less normal way, but you bet money on each hole. The lowest score at the hole wins the prize money. Up to five players may then be selected for a match. There are nine different computer players, including the Golden Bear himself - each player has his particular style of play. Once you have polished up your golf skills you may opt to play a round of 18 holes: 9 out and 9 in. You will be given some invaluable information and tips from Jack and will then be presented with an over-

head view of the course, as well as any important information for that hole. In the Beginner option a club is automatically selected for you for each shot from tee to green. Here, the computer actually calculates the yardage from the pin and selects the most appropriate club. But opting for Expert, you're on your own, although the computer does default to sand wedge in



the bunker or the putter on the green.

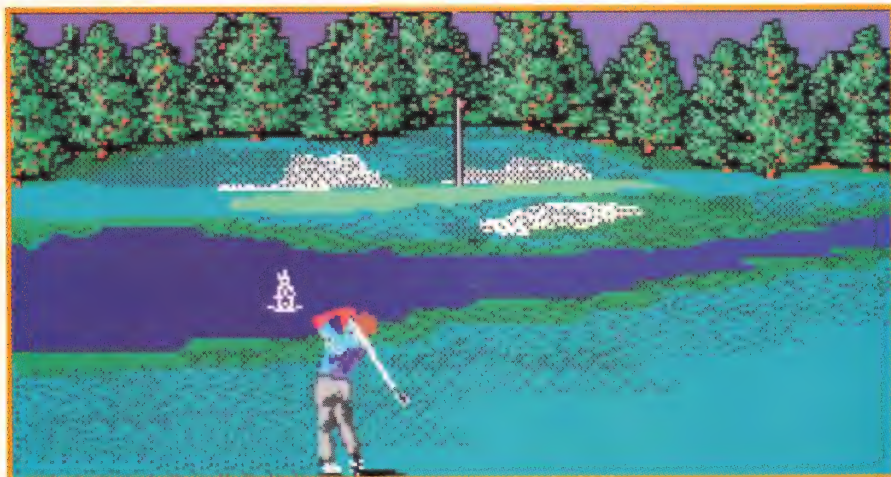
The main display shows the view of the course from the position of your golfer, although the view can be changed. A small flagstick to the top of the screen indicates where the hole is and a cursor can be moved to left or right of the flagstick in order to line up your shot, taking wind direction and speed, which is displayed to the bottom-left of the screen, and distance into account. An appropriate



The first movement when hitting the ball is the backswing, which determines the distance that the ball will travel. Therefore, skilled use of the power bar will be required to judge your shot accurately.

When putting, you must move the flagstick cursor into the appropriate position, taking wind direction into consideration. Don't strike the ball too hard as it tends to over-run.

Plop! Golf balls don't grow on trees, you know. If you do manage to 'dunk your biccys', then you will be given a chance to correct the position of the ball, and continue.



club is selected for you, although personal choice is also available. Each strike of the ball includes three stages: the backswing, the power and downswing, and, finally, the strike. Each stage is measured on the power bar which rises up in relation to the distance and power of your shot. If you're standing on a tee of say a 300 yard hole, you take the driver and hit it full strength which will move the ball some 250 yards down the fairway. In most cases it's best to hit it dead straight. Of course you don't want to hit every shot at full pelt unless you want to walk to the next county and so much of the preparation of the shot is gauging the power of the shot on the power swing zone display.

Hooking and slicing are the two most dreaded words in an amateur golfer's vocabulary. But swerving the ball around obstacles is a fact of life on the profes-

sional circuit and in this game it is a technique which has to be mastered if you're taking the simulation seriously. To 'draw' the ball to the left or right you click for the distance setting and as the colour on the gauge descends to the bottom line of the swing zone clicking the lefthand mouse button before the colour reaches the very bottom, (in other words, swing early) your shot will be hooked. Overswing and underswing are two common mistakes made in golf and sometimes the most difficult to correct. If you don't make the distance click accurately on the power swing line you overswing and of course if you're early with ther click you underswing.

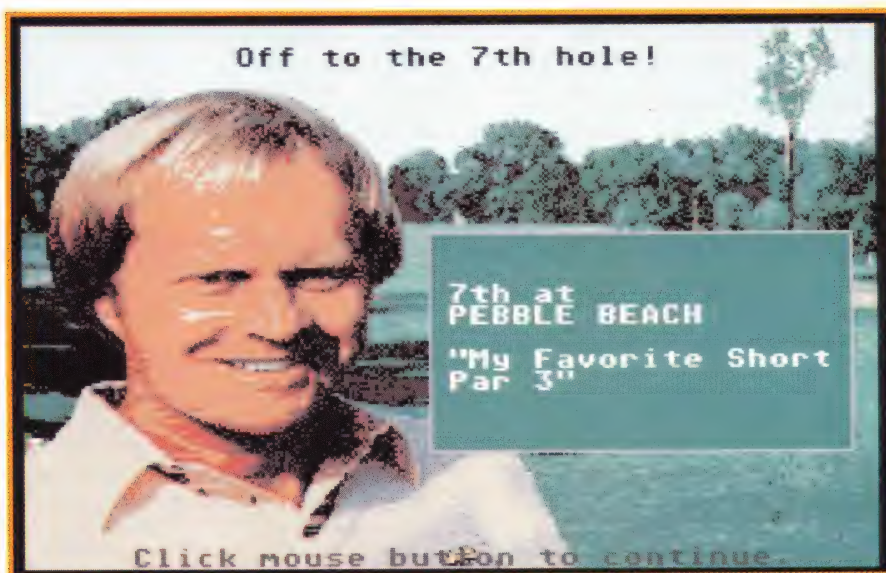
Every golf enthusiast will tell you that perfect golfing weather is rarer than rocking horse manure and so battling against the elements is a fact of golfing life and it seems there's no escape from it in golfing

After the excellent Leaderboard, golf sims seemed to have little more to offer and, although Jack Nicklaus' Golf doesn't really offer anything new, the presentation has been tidied up and improved. The display of each course has been beautifully drawn with great attention to detail. There isn't that much sound, but I don't really think that golf games require a great deal of music and sound effects. My only gripe is the tedious updating of each scene, which seems to take ages. This may, eventually, lead to boredom. Still, if golf's your game, then I would suggest that you take a serious look at Jack Nicklaus' Golf.

SW

simulations either. The strength and direction of the wind naturally effects the path of the ball and with practice you'll be able to read the flag pole wind indicator and adapt the shot accordingly. Crosswinds, headwinds and tailwinds all feature in the game. After each shot has been taken, the screen will update and display your new perspective from where the ball finally came to rest. On sinking the ball a display chart will appear displaying your score so far into the course. You will also be informed of your longest tee-off and the number of Birdie's and Eagle's you have scored.

STA



Jack will appear before each course and give you his own personal opinion on the one you will next be playing on. The advice he gives isn't really that helpful, though.

I really enjoy golf simulations. Personally, I prefer U.S. Gold's Leaderboard. However, Jack Nicklaus, together with Accolade have presented a first rate game. The overall presentation is excellent and colour has been used to good effect. The landscapes are finely detailed, although I was a little concerned about the rather slow screen update. The sound is pretty minimal, with the woosh of the club and the thud of the ball being the main effects. The game is controlled via the mouse and Accolade have made every effort in making it user friendly. To sum up, Jack Nicklaus's golf is an enjoyable game. One that I'd play again and again.

NC



Leaderboard ruled the pixelized fairways for many years and it's still really enjoyable to play. But it's time to hang up Dad's old wooden clubs with the woolly covers on, and trade them in for more up-to-date gear. There are some very thorough and realistic golf simulations around at the moment and this is pretty representative. Thanks to the beginner and expert option, you can either thrash about the course to your heart's content or take the simulation seriously. One thing that really annoyed me was the screen fill between shots which is painfully slow - it would be quicker to walk up the fairway in real-life golf. But generally, as a computer simulation, this game serves the sport well.

JS

Asterix has to be the most popular European cartoon with a personality and humour that appeals to all ages. So I'm amazed that it's taken so long for it to be translated into a computer game. Thankfully, Coktel/Logiciels have produced a decent game here which doesn't put the classic cartoon series to shame. The first thing that hits you is how similar the characterization and animation is to the cartoon original which conveys an air of authenticity. There's a good combination of adventure and discovery gameplay mixed with arcade fighting that often calls for wit rather than brute strength. Generally, the presentation is colourful and finished to a high standard and there's screen after screen of amusing scenarios and tricky situations. Quirky humour in abundance - a barrel of laughs.

JS

"Way back in 1961, French cartoonists, Goscinny and Uderzo, created the adventures of Asterix the Gaul. Now, some twenty-nine years on, the loveable Gaul makes his debut on the ST."



Having used a magic potion on a hapless Roman, you manage to create a distraction and find a way into the Roman fort.

ASTERIX - OPERATION GETAFIX

COKTEL VISION (£19.99)

The year is 50 BC. Gaul is entirely occupied by the Romans. Well, not entirely... One small village of indomitable Gauls still holds out against the invaders. Despite the best efforts of the four Roman camps: Aquarium, Totorum, Laudanium and Compendium, which surround the village, the Gauls still manage to stubbornly hold out against the invaders.

So, what's the secret behind the Gauls' resistance? Well, the village druid, Getafix, knows the recipe of a secret potion which gives the villagers the strength of one hundred men. One drop of the potion and the Gauls can defeat even the strongest of Caesar's legions.

Remembering the Asterix game on the good ol' C64, I was a little dubious when I was handed Operation Getafix. However, I really enjoyed the Gaul's sixteen-bit antics. Okay, so the gameplay isn't too taxing, but who needs complex stuff all the time anyway? The game's graphics are well drawn, colourful and nicely animated; I particularly liked the way in which the wings on Asterix's helmet flopped about. The sound is also well presented. The title tune is quite catchy while the sound effects are a bit weird: I mean, why does Getafix keep yelling "lemonade" in a high-pitched voice? At the end of the day, Asterix - Operation Getafix, is a neat little game - I liked it!

NC

Anyhow, during one particularly heated battle with the Romans, Obelix managed to overthrow a huge menhir. It just so happened that the ancient druid was in the direct firing-line of the stone missile. The bump on the head certainly affected poor Getafix. His strange behaviour led the villagers to believe he'd gone nuts. As his condition grew worse, it was left to Asterix to discover a cure.

Assuming control of the Gaul, you must find the correct ingredients to make the cure. Should you fail in your mission, the druid will undoubtedly die, taking the secret of super-human strength with him. Searching the forests and even the Roman camp, you must collect six ingredients. Of course, you're bound to bump into the odd Roman. In which case, you may either run off or stand your ground and fight. As you continue on your mission, an energy bar (depicted by legs of roast boar) slowly depletes. In some areas of the forest, boars roam freely and energy may be replaced by catching these wild beasts.

You'll no doubt encounter Prolix, a crafty soothsayer, who's somehow man-

aged to earn the trust of the village. Prolix is not to be trusted and, should he be captured by the Romans, he'll waste no time in informing them of the village's little predicament. Meanwhile, when you've finally recovered all of the ingredients, you should visit the druid. Having told Getafix what items to mix, he'll create the concoction - often with hilarious side effects. To win, you'll need to find the correct combination of ingredients required to cure the druid. Fail, and the village is doomed.

STA



Prolix, the soothsayer, has managed to trick the villagers into waiting on his every whim.

STA
Rating
74%

GRAPHICS: 69%
SOUND: 68%

LASTING APPEAL: 71%
ADDICTIVENESS: 72%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A



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Also, in the next issue of this magazine you will find a selection of our products and some of our special offers.

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Black Tiger is essentially a platform-style game. However, mistime a leap and you could well find yourself spiked.



BLACK TIGER

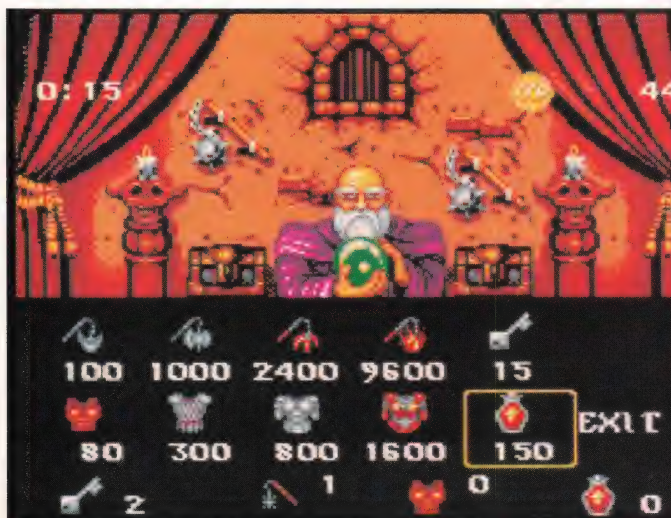
"The kingdom has been thrown into a world of destruction and torment. From nowhere, a champion has arrived to restore law and order. He is Black Tiger."

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ US GOLD (£19.99) ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

The names of U.S. Gold and Capcom have been synonymous for some time now. Smash-hit coin-op titles such as Forgotten Worlds, Strider and Ghouls'n'Ghosts have all been critically acclaimed by the gamesplaying public. Many people have accused coin-op conversions of being unoriginal, but their constant domination of the software charts continues to secure their existence. Will U.S. Gold's latest release, Black Tiger, prove to be their biggest yet?

Long, long ago, the kingdom within which our village stood was a peaceful and happy place. Then, one dark night,

three huge, blood-red dragons descended from out of the inky-blackness. The giant lizard-like creatures brought havoc to the kingdom. Death and destruction became commonplace and the kingdom was thrown into a never-ending nightmare. Survivors of the dragons' ferocious attacks resigned themselves to a life of torment and torture. Until, that is, a brave young warrior appeared. No one for sure knew the identity of this courageous fighter, but rumours were



An old man stands imprisoned in stone. Hanging precariously from a stone pillar, you must put paid to the nearby fire demon before rescuing the poor victim. As a reward for freeing him, the old man will offer to sell you some extra goodies.

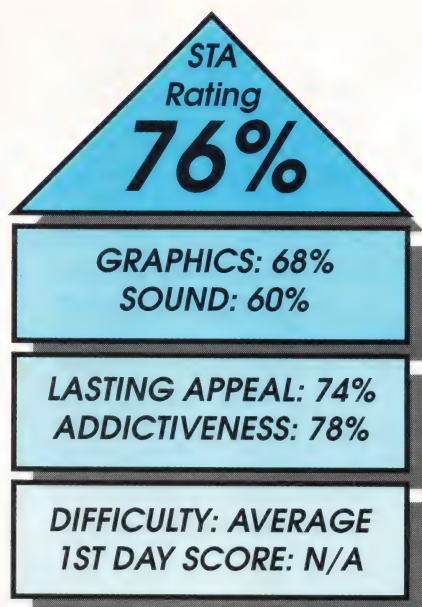
When compared to their coin-op parents, many arcade licences pale into insignificance - Not Black Tiger! U.S. Gold's latest Capcom game is excellent. I was impressed with the game's graphics. Colour has been used to good effect and both the backdrops and main character sprites are well drawn; I particularly liked the way in which Black Tiger climbed. The sonics, whilst not breaking any new ground, are of a good standard and complement the action well. As for the gameplay, the action is both fast and furious. Unlike many games of this ilk, I found myself really wanting to battle through to the next level. All in all, Black Tiger is a great game - I loved it!

NC

rife that he was an orphaned child who had vowed to avenge the brutal death of his parents. Known to the oppressed villagers as Black Tiger, the champion ventured forth on his quest to restore the balance of law and order.

Assuming the role of the mysterious Black Tiger, you must conquer eight demon-infested levels before peace can once again be restored to the kingdom. In the true arcade tradition, the end of each level is guarded by a terrifying and ferocious monster. Add to this the myriad of malicious monsters and the labyrinth of tunnels and you can begin to see the enormous task that faces our hero.

Of course, Black Tiger has become a master fighter. As he sets out on his quest, the mighty warrior has two-hundred Zenny coins to his name. As the valiant warrior encounters his foes he can attack them by letting fly with his razor-edged mace. In addition to his yo-yo-like weapon, Black Tiger is also a pretty mean shot with a knife. Tapping the fire button sends both death-dealing weapons flying across the screen. As they die, enemies release collectable treasures; Zenny coins are the most common prize, but time-giv-



ing hourglasses and keys can also be won. In addition to bashing money out of your foes, bonus cash can be gained by freeing old men from the labyrinths. Instead of rewarding you, some of the wizened folk offer you the chance to purchase better armour, more powerful weapons, keys or vitality potions.

Each level must be completed within a strict time limit. Collecting hourglasses will prolong the time, but should the clock reach zero, one of the champion's lives is lost. Situated at the top of the screen, next to the timer, is a vitality bar. Extra energy can be obtained by either collecting or purchasing potions. However, when the bar disappears, Black Tiger dissolves into a pile of bones and a life is forfeit.

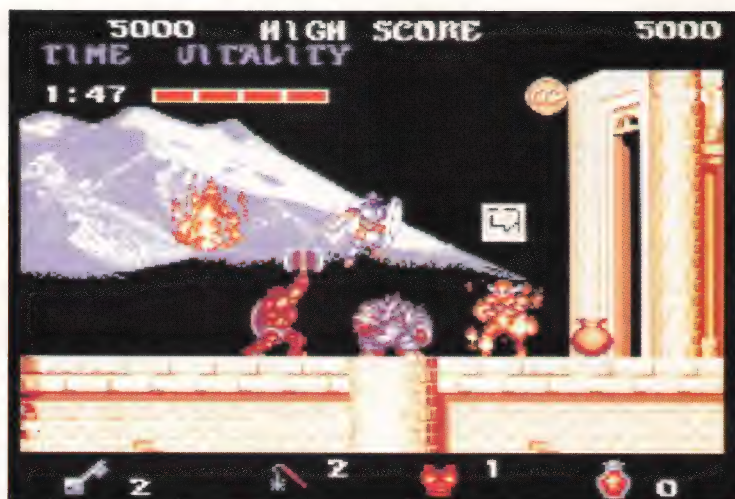
Four icons are displayed at the base of the screen. By glancing at the icons you are able to see at a glance just how many potions and keys you have in your inventory. The strength of your armour is also shown. It's advisable to buy armour quite regularly, as the effectiveness of it is worn down by every hit sustained. Finally, the power of your mace is also shown. Obviously, the stronger your mace, the easier it is to dispose of your enemies.

All of the levels are packed with hundreds of assorted nasties. Goblins, fire

With platform-style games re-emerging as a popular arcade pursuit, U.S. Gold are well prepared with an immensely playable coin-op conversion of Capcom's popular Black Tiger. A number of things impressed me about the game, such as the likeness of both its presentation and gameplay of to the arcade original. Also the animation and the sprite detection is near enough perfect - crucial for a game of this speed and difficulty. But what is most important is that the source game is damn good fun with plenty of surprises and variety, a great use of weaponry and originality which'll leave the most experienced platform fan frothing and sweating. Highly enjoyable!

JS

The action soon heats up, ogres, mummies even deadly block-heads, all attempt to cast you into oblivion.



Looking very similar to Strider, Black Tiger places you in the part of a viking warrior who must break the spell of three dragons. Heard this story before? The plot of Black Tiger is very unoriginal and not very well implemented. Although the graphics are colourful they are very small and not very detailed. The sound effects were above average but nothing memorable. There are some nice little touches here and there, as in the death sequence which looks very similar to Ghouls'n'Ghosts, but that's about it. It is this similarity that put me off Black Tiger. Not a bad effort but there are much better games of this type around.

SW

demons and vial viles appear to be the most common. Not all of the horrors can be destroyed and some leave our hero with very nasty side-effects. For instance, contact with the Audrey III (a man-eating plant) will poison you and prevent the use of your knives until a cure is bought.

Meanwhile, touching a frost column left by a Grim Reaper Hag will reverse left and right on the joystick. All in all, Black Tiger has got quite a battle on his hands, but the future of the whole kingdom depends on him. He must win through.

STA



Using keys, you can open the numerous treasure chests that are littered throughout the levels. In return you'll either receive a bonus or set off a nasty trap.

As well as having to contend with the countless nasties, there are also a number of obstacles that must be negotiated. Here, Black Tiger must time his leap so that he won't collide with the huge spinning coins.



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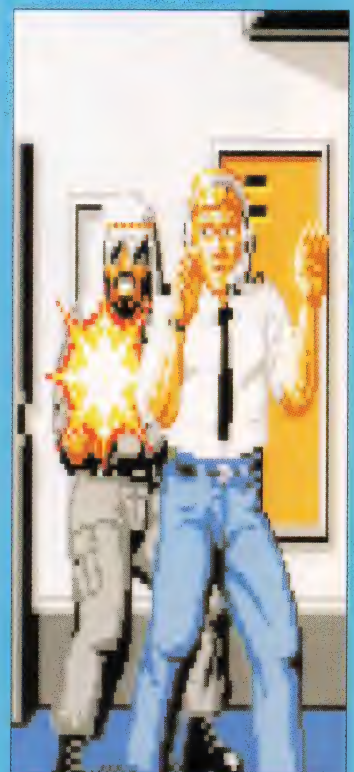
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Barbarian, Captain Blood
Bionic Commando
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Archipelagos, Shackled
R-Type, Silkworm
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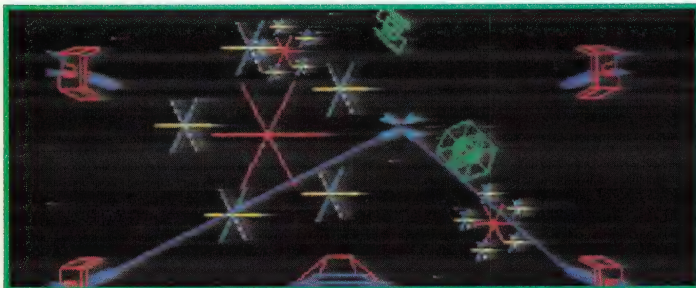
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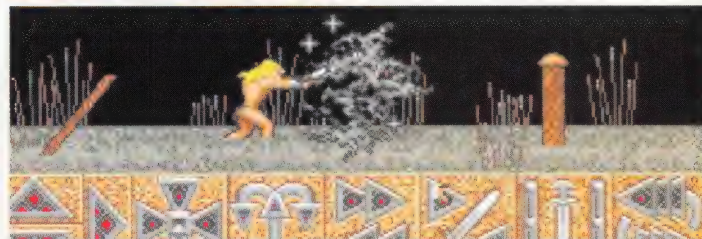
STAR WARS - DOMARK

Save whizzing all about the screen and losing your shields by centralising your sights and firing your lasers. As any enemy that appear head towards the center of the screen you should be able to wipe the Tie-Fighters away with ease.



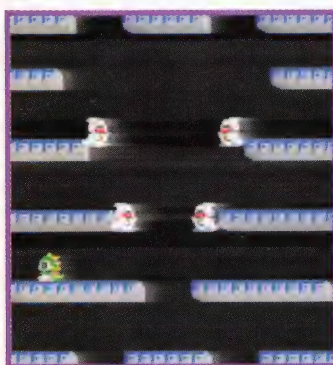
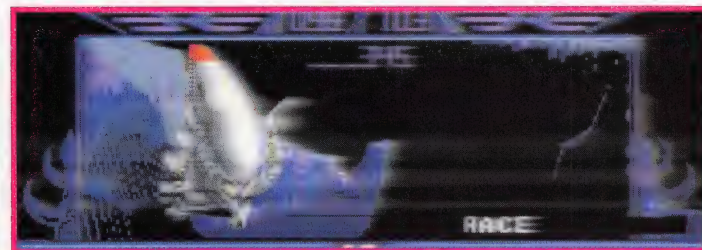
BARBARIAN

S. Chapman of Hants is still having trouble with that ancient Psygnosis game, Barbarian. Prepare yourself for instant relief. If you need a little immortality then press 0 then 4, followed by the left-hand minus sign. Then press 0 then 8 and the minus sign again. Pressing 5 and then 9 will make you invincible. Yippee!



CAPTAIN BLOOD - INFOGRAMES

It seems that a lot of people are a little bored with the hyperspace section. As soon as you hear the humming from hyperspace mode, hold down the left mouse button, and repeatedly press the right button. This way, hyperspace will be a great deal shorter.



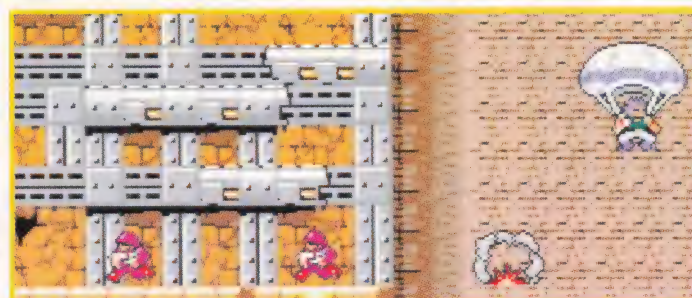
BUBBLE BOBBLE - FIREBIRD

Dave from Norwich is having a little trouble with Firebird's excellent game - Bubble Bobble. You can accumulate a massive score on Bubble Bobble when on the first screen. All you have to do is bubble the first two monsters and then proceed to fill the screen up with as many bubbles as possible. Bubble and burst any remaining monsters and the remaining bubbles should turn into fruit. Each one is worth 500 points.



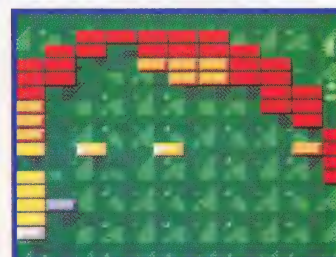
BIONIC COMMANDO - GO!

Mike Fields of Cardiff needs a little help with Bionic Commando on level 2. Run towards the far right wall and stand below the platform next to it. Now any enemy who fall down can be easily shot for 400 points each. Hit enough and you'll score enough for extra lives. As an extra tip, finish the level when the timer reaches zero and you'll earn yourself a whacking 1,000,000 points.

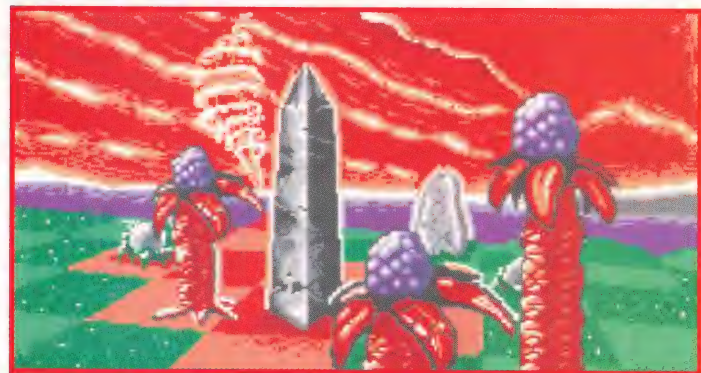


REVENGE OF DOH - IMAGINE

Someone who is having problems on Revenge of Doh is P. Dannins who hales from London. Load up Arkanoid II as usual, and when the pink Arkanoid screen appears, type IMAGINE while holding down Caps Lock. When loaded, and the opening bit is showing, type "PETEJOHNSON WANTSHEAT" (no spaces). Now when playing, press 'S' and both exits will open, allowing you to go to the next screen. Hope this helps Paul.



HELPLINE...HELPLINE...HELPLINE...HELPLINE...



ARCHIPELAGOS - LOGOTRON

This game seems to be causing problems for quite a few of you, out there. Here's some helpful tips.

STONES - the only way that these can be destroyed is by shooting at their base. However, finding them isn't that easy as they do not show up on the map. As you know, once all the stones are destroyed, you can then crumble the obelisk.

BLOOD EGGS - these infect the land, turning it red, or simply destroying it. As a rule, don't get too near them, especially when the weather is stormy, as they fire.

TORNADOS - Avoid at all costs! If you get within three squares of this devastating feature, its adios amigo.

NECROMANCER - if you thought the other obstacles were hard, you ain't seen nothing yet. Once again, he is to be avoided, as he turns the land into quicksand, sinking you before you know it.

ARBOREAL TREES - plot your way around these carefully, because if a tree grows on the square that you are presently occupying you will die.

To make travelling across sand or water easier just form one square of land in the middle of the obstruction, and press the cursor on it. Although some stones are harder to destroy than others, keep on pumping shots into it; after a while it will crumble. As a rule, whenever you are attacking stones, always shoot them from within a three square radius, or your shots will have no effect. When moving around the island, it can be used to judge your direction as it always indicates north. To build up any lost energy, just go around blasting stones and spores to top yourself up.



SHATTERED - U.S. GOLD

Whilst on level one, collect the key, and move into a secret passage directly below the key. Move down and then right as far as possible. Move up and you will reach a small room. In this room is a locked door, so use the key and go up into the next small room. In here there is another door, so walk through it and, voila! The end of Shattered. OK, Jason Berry of Portsmouth.



R-TYPE - ACTIVISION

This brilliant shoot-'em-up is causing some grief to Steve Daniels from Sutton. I managed to hunt out this little gem from the ST Action archives. When the title screen asks you to insert disk two, press the 'HELP' key and type ME. Next press the up arrow and then insert disk B as usual. Press space to begin. Start the game and press the following keys for various cheat effects:

F5 - Toggles between invulnerability from walls and aliens.

F6 - Toggles between invulnerability from alien fire.

F7 - Infinite credits.

F8 - Toggle control of orb. Another player can now control the orb by using the mouse, making it an entertaining two-player game.

SILKWORM - VIRGIN/SALES-CURVE

Help is at hand R. Towle of Edinburgh. Load up the game as normal, and then press C when the high-score table appears. A new screen will unfold, showing FAT MOUSE'S CHEESE MENU. Restart the game and play as normal, but whilst playing, type in GORGONZOLA. You will now enter CHEESE MODE. In 'Cheese Mode' you will find that all of the bouncing bombs are turned into red edams, and that all the words such as Game Over and the like are all replaced by the word Edam. Additionally, pressing the C key grants you extra credits - sorry, cheeses!

DEFENDER OF THE CROWN - MIRRORSOFT

Simon Sheppam of Southwick is having troubles with Defender of the Crown.

A. Geoffrey Longsword is the best character as his swordplay is second-to-none, and this is an important factor in the game.

B. Buy plenty of knights as they are a lot better at attacking.

C. Always keep a small army at your home castle, because if you lose your castle you lose the game.

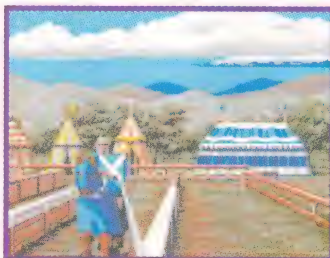
D. Raiding castles is especially handy at the start of the game, as it is a useful way to build up capital for soldiers.

E. Always return home to replenish your army between turns.

F. Never attack land that has just changed hands, as the enemy's campaign army will still be there. When you are attacked, wait to see how many men there are before deciding on your actions; don't hesitate to run if you start losing.

G. Never attack a castle unless you are sure you have superior manpower, then choose 'fierce attack'.

H. Spies are expensive but are generally worth the money, especially before attacking a castle.



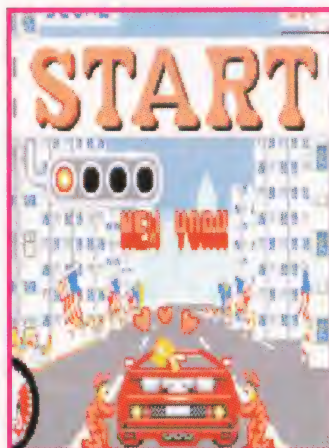
GTGA - SMALL TIPS..SMALL TIPS..

CRISPY WRITES... *Cor blimey, I've been snowed under with tips just lately. Maybe it's got something to do with me offering a prize for every small tip we publish. Anyroad, despite some of the hints being quite original, many of you have chosen to send in rather old tips and, dare I say it, some of you have even resorted to blatant plagiarism. Now, I don't mind receiving old or even copied tips. But really, it won't do you any good and you won't win a prize. Still, on a happier note, thanks to all of you who have sent in tips and a special thank you to the Coca Cola Company and Golden Wonder, without whom... I hate to think.*

TURBO OUTRUN - U.S. GOLD

Okey dokey, here's a little tip for all of you who are having difficulty with U.S. Gold's conversion of the Sega classic, Turbo Outrun. Christopher Smith of London has discovered that if you type in the phrase "WEARAPPEEL" while the countdown begins, you can access a number of hidden extras. Pressing "T" will give you extra time, thus allowing you to complete each stage with ease. Punching "B" will restart the stage while "N" will send to

the next level. Tapping "G" seems to be a little pointless, it simply uses up a credit. Should you run out of turbo boosters, pressing "D" will give you a whole new complement. Apparently, keys 1 to 9 will send you directly to the corresponding level. Finally, Christopher has also discovered that pressing the "F" key will complete the entire game. Well, thanks for that one Chris, the game you asked for will be landing on your doormat shortly.



RINGS OF MEDUSA - STARBYTE

Now then, I bet those of you who bought this game found it hard to start with. You did? Well, in case you've been experiencing a little trouble we've discovered a little cheat. Don't ask me where it came from, a scraggly piece of paper just turned up on my desk. Still, once the game has loaded and you've typed in your name, try entering the following "DESOXYRIBONUKLEINSAEUR E". Yes, I know it's a bit of a mouthful, but once entered, pressing the "HELP" key will bring up a cheat menu from which you may select a number of sneaky options. Thanks to the tooth fairies, I'm sure it was you lot who came up with that one.



P-47 - FIREBIRD



Right, now a handy little cheat for this great little conversion by Firebird. If you're finding the going just a little bit too tough, then try typing in the name "ZEBEDEE" on the high-score table. Although you might not know it, this will allow you to access two very useful little cheat modes. Start the game again and play as normal. Should you discover that your

health is depleting rapidly and you are losing lives at the rate of knots, try pressing "F2", this will top up your lives thus allowing you to blow even more enemy installations to bits. Maybe you don't want to fly across all of the levels, in which case, simply tap the "F1" key to skip levels. Finally, you've got Trevor Robbins of Norwich to thank for that useful little tip.



WEIRD DREAMS - RAINBIRD

First there was the hype, then the game was released, then, well, nothing really. Despite featuring wonderful graphics, Weird Dreams failed to inspire most of you. Still, Kevin Cordes from Whycombe has discovered a neat little tip. Apparently, when you start the game, walk into the right-hand mirror. Go as far as you can before finally disappearing and use the "HELP" key to enter the Morse equivalent for S.O.S. (That's three quick taps followed by three prolonged presses and then another three quick taps). If you manage to enter the cheat

correctly, you'll be blessed with infinite lives. Thanks for that one, Kevin.

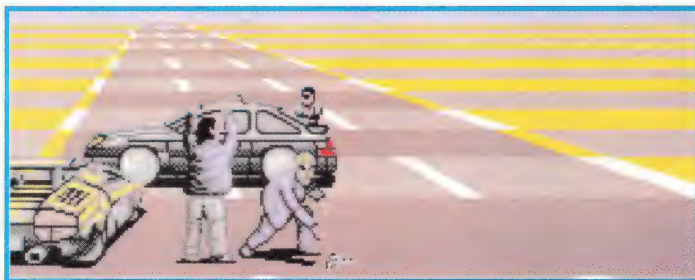


GTGA - SMALL TIPS..SMALL TIPS..

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT - OCEAN

Well, well, well. Here's a great cheat for Ocean's latest blow 'em to bits-style conversion, Operation Thunderbolt. So, you're encountering a few problems are you? Can't get passed stage five, eh? Well, neither could I for a while. Fear not, for Nathan Ross from Humberside has sent in a very useful cheat. You should be able to achieve a score of over 50000, shouldn't you? Well, when prompted to type in your name, don't. Instead, enter "WIGAN NINJA". Now, restart the game and play as normal. Only, this time, should you find the going just a little too tough,

then simply press the "F7" key to complete a level. Remember, however, that you must rescue at least one hostage from both of the enemy bases in order to be able to finish the game. Good Luck!



CHASE HQ - OCEAN



Personally, I wasn't too keen on this game. Still, it seems as though hundreds of you liked it. I've been swamped by cheats for this little number. In fact, so many of you have sent in the same cheat. To be fair, I place all your letters in a hat (well actually, it was a cardboard box) and pulled out the name of the

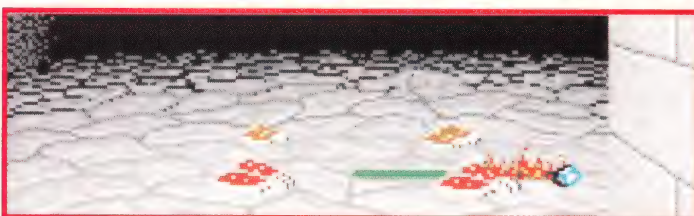
winner of the prize. Scott Ramsey of East Preston, West Sussex is the winner of a game of his choice. Now for the cheat. Load the game as normal, and begin the game. Whilst playing, hold down both the fire button on your joystick and the left mouse button. At the same time, type in the name "GROWLER". If you've entered the cheat correctly, pressing "T" will reset the timer to 60, thus enabling you to complete the level with ease. Finally, try tapping the spacebar as each level loads. Apparently, this will let you reach speeds of around 500 kmh when using turbo boosters. Well, there you go. Thanks to Scott and everyone else who sent in that cheat.

AFTER THE WAR - DINAMIC

We loved this beat'em-up-then-blow'em-to-bits game. It seems as though Ray Middleton did too. According to Ray, the code to access the gun-toting second level is 101069. Meanwhile, he also mentions that whilst on the first section, pressing "ALT", "1" and "D" will make you invincible. He goes on to suggest that pressing "J" instead of "D" will do the same for the second section. So, there you go. Thanks to Ray for that one.



CHAOS STRIKES BACK - FTL



Cor, this must be ultimate cheat for the ultimate game. Start the game as normal and find a dragon. Make your party stand in front of the huge beast and cast the spell MON ZO GOR SAR. Pause the game by pressing "ESC" and, whilst holding down the "ALT" key, type "LORD LIBRASULUS SMITES THEE DOWN". Next, unpause the game and kill the dragon. If you enter the cheat correctly, he will leave behind the original Firestaff. Pick this all-powerful weapon up and your party will become invincible - you'll also be able to destroy the evil dark lord in the traditional fashion. A huge thank you to Frank Ibber from Cheem who discovered that little gem.

UNTOUCHABLES - OCEAN

None of you managed to come up with a cheat for Ocean's Untouchables. So, I rang up Ocean and demanded one. On level one, pause the game and type "BRIDGE ROLLS", that should get you to level two. In order to pass through level two, pause the game and type "MAC N ALLEY". The alley level is pretty tough so, once again,

pause the game and type "KID ZAPPING". Baby sitting isn't exactly my favourite pastime. If you're experiencing difficulty in guiding the pram, pause the game and type "A NIT IN TIME" in order to get to the last level. Unfortunately, there is no cheat for this last shoot-out. Instead, you'll have to kill the mobster yourself. Good Luck!



GTGA - FIGHTER BOMBER

Flight Commander Whitey has put together a few hints for Activision's latest game *Fighter Bomber*. So, if you're encountering a few problems - read on, our ace pilot gives the game away.



CHOOSING YOUR WEAPONS

If you're having a few problems with Activision's great flight sim - Bomber - we've a few tips just to keep you in the air and on top of the enemy. There are many fighters to choose from but the best one is the F-111F. This plane has a greater ceiling, a short take off distance and a larger payload. The first thing you should notice about your targets is the fact that they are all land-based, apart from the enemy planes, of course.

Therefore, you will only really need to load your fighter-bomber up with Mavericks - TV guided air-to-surface missiles - sidewinders comes as default. If you can fit them, sneak a few HARM (ALARM) missiles under your payload. These are air launched anti-radiation missiles and will home in on any ECM emissions released by any enemy planes within the vicinity. You're now ready for take off.



TAKE OFF

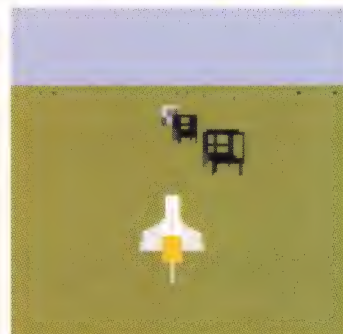
First, turn off the wheelbrakes and then switch on the engine to 100% by pressing 0. Pressing 0 again will switch on the afterburners but be careful to conserve your fuel. You will then be taxing down the runway. As

soon as you reach your take-off speed (around 200kts), pull back on the joystick and climb to about 3000ft, remembering to retract your landing gear. Easy, isn't it?



YOUR FIRST TARGET

Switch on your first waypoint by pressing U. The waypoint display will indicate the range (RNG) and the heading (HDG). By toggling the radar proximity you will be able to pick up the target once it is close enough. Direct your plane to the target-heading by checking the heads-up-display (HUD) - use the rudder control to set your direction accurately as rolling the plane can prove difficult at times. On enabling the Mavericks a cross hairs target indicator will appear in the HUD and when the target is visible press Backspace to pickle it. If you are within range a box lock-on will appear which indicates that the targeting-computer has located the target and the Mavericks can be fired. Hit the fire button and watch that missile go. You can view the missile as it homes in on the target by pressing F3. The information box will tell you if the target has been destroyed successfully.



GTGA - FIGHTER BOMBER

INTERCEPTING ENEMY AIRCRAFT

The best way to avoid enemy fighters is to climb to a higher ceiling that they cannot reach. The F111F has a ceiling of 60,000ft which just about wipes the opposition away. Should an enemy plane manage to seek you out, you will be warned of the impending danger by your information box. Instead of flying straight, twist and turn the plane to avoid a lock on. By pressing S the waypoint indicator will display the enemy's heading,

speed, range and height. Immediately swing your plane round to face him but keep your distance, as some of these pilots are trained the Kamikaze way. Select Sidewinders and, when the targeting-computer opticle turns red, let her go. Take evasive action immediately by firing off flares if the enemy fighter manages to release any air-to-air missiles. Keep your fingers crossed and sing "God bless America".



REFUELLING

Probably the most complicated manoeuvre to perform, refuelling in the air is accomplished by linking up with a tanker plane. Using the waypoint indicator again, lock on to the tanker's heading and switch on the afterburners. Enable the Mavericks as you will be using the cross-hairs as a level when lining up with the refueling line. Once your heading is correct and the tanker sighted in your HUD, turn off the afterburner. The tanker should get closer. Adjust the pitch of your aircraft so that the fuel line looks as if it is resting on the horizon - use the rudder to adjust your heading. When you are close enough your planes fuel pipe receptacle will swing out near

the cockpit. As the tanker nears turn your engines down to 40% (press 4) and line up with the fuel line so that it is visible inside, and to the right, of the HUD - your speed at this point should be around 250-300kts. The fuel pipes should then link. A great deal of practice is required to become adept at refuelling - the biggest mistake is approaching the tanker too quickly. If you pass the tanker, turn down the engine to about 30% and switch on the airbrakes (B). The refuelling plane should then overtake you. Turn off the airbrakes and try again. Once your fighter-bomber has refuelled successfully press H and the fuel lines will be disengaged.



LANDING

Providing you read the mission text carefully you should be aware of which end of the runway you will be attempting to land on. Use the satellite view (F8) to pinpoint exactly how close you are to the runway and adjust your heading by using the rudder. Once you are satisfied with your direction return to the cockpit view. You should now be able to see the runway in the HUD. Slowly drop your altitude and reduce your speed to 30% - remember to drop the landing

gear. Keep lowering your altitude until you are just above the runway. Put on the airbrakes and lower your plane's nose, slowly and carefully. The wheels will screech as they hit the runway tarmac. Line up with the runway using the rudder and drop your speed to 0% by pressing 1. Press 1 again to turn off the engine and then switch off the airbrakes. You made it. Congratulations on your first successful flight.



OH NO IT'S A BUCKAROO!

Right, by now you should be quite a competent flyer. Still, I bet you'd like to try all the missions, wouldn't you? Well, instead of entering your own name on the pilot's log, try

typing in, "BUCKAROO". The computer will respond by announcing, "Oh no, it's a Buckaroo", but more importantly, you'll be able to try any of the sixteen missions!

GTGA - SHUFFLEPUCK CAFE

If any of you out there are tearing your hair out over Shufflepuck Cafe, Graham Pack of Denmead, Hampshire has sent in the following tips to stop you going bald.

SKIP FREENEY

If you can't beat this guy then you may as well take the disk out and give up altogether. No problems so far.



VINNIE THE DWEB

Nothing to worry about here, either. Try and strike the puck into the corners of his half. This is a good chance to accumulate some precious points.

VISINE ORB

Visine tends to get a little angry if you hit the puck at him too hard and will return the puck even harder. Beware also of his deadly serve which bounces from side to side on the table. All said and done, though, he shouldn't really prove that much of a problem.



PRINCESS BEJIN

Don't be put off by her good looks as her serve may well take you through the back glass. There is a small tune that plays before she strikes the puck. By memorizing the tunes you will be able to tell, beforehand, which shot she will be playing. On learning the tunes you will discover that one is longer than the other. When the longer tune plays position your bat in the center of the table and as far forward as it will go. When she serves, the puck should rebound



off the table and strike your bat, returning to the princess. When the shorter of the tunes plays move your bat to the same side as hers. You will then be able to

return the puck easily. Once the serve has been mastered, Bejin should prove easy, just keep hitting to the gaps.

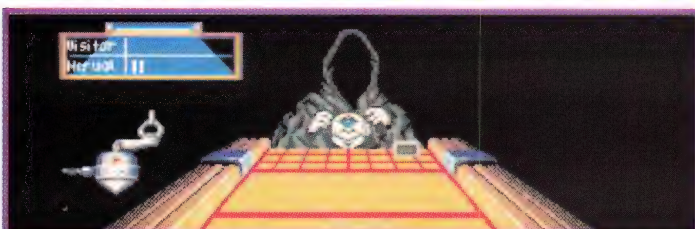
THE GENERAL

This is where things start getting a little hot. The General is a pretty tough player to beat. Try and aim to the corners of the table and hit the puck with all your strength. Strike at it too softly and it will be returned like a bullet.



LEXAN SMYTHE-WORTHINGTON

Don't be put off by Lexan's good start. As you get better and start winning he will soon become far too drunk to keep up with you. Lexan's weak spot is the right hand side of the table. Keep striking the puck to that side at the beginning and throughout the match and you'll soon see the points notching up.



BIFF RAUNCH

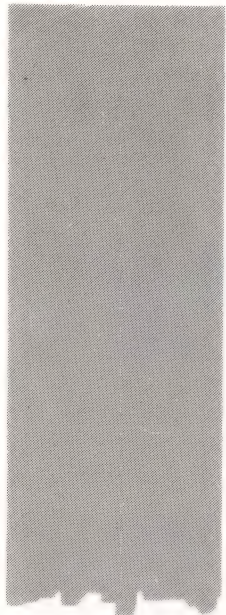
Now we're getting to the real masters of Shufflepuck Cafe. Be prepared, for Biff is one difficult son of a gun to beat. His serve is like a bullet. His reactions and accuracy are also perfect and he doesn't take losing too well. There are no real tips for this guy. Hit the puck as hard as you can, use all the angles and be prepared for some very long-winded rallies. Biff seems to have the same weakness as Lexan so try to hit the puck into the right-hand corner of the table.



NEURAL TOILLE

Although Neural looks pretty damn brilliant, his only real troublesome shot is his powerful serve. You'll have to be quick but once you've successfully returned it everything should be okay. Keep playing soft shots to Neural as he will return them at the same speed and once he gets complacent and his bat wanders off smash the puck into the opposite corner. Another one bites the dust.

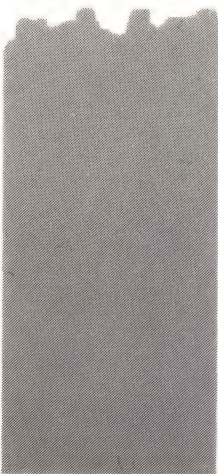
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WIN A CAMCORDER



This month, the competition comes courtesy of software moguls Ocean Software, reputed to be Britain's most prolific software house. The Ocean label has been emblazoned on top selling games since the start of the computer boom and their presence in the home-computer industry is stronger than ever. This standing has been achieved through consistent quality, awareness of fashion and an unwavering commitment to produce games which are great entertainment. Games like *Batman*, *The Untouchables* and *Operation Wolf* demonstrate Ocean's ability to bid for the best and most sought-after movie licenses, and the quality of these games quash the belief that license games rely entirely on the name. When it comes to vying for arcade licenses, Ocean is no less a slouch! *Chase H.Q.* and the unbeatable *Operation Wolf*, which scooped up prize after prize for 'Best Conversion', are just two of many coin-op successes.

The games which are currently in production look set to continue Ocean's strong presence in the software charts and never before has there been such variety. Current releases include

Retaliator, a stunning flight simulation which is on the leading edge of graphic design. Meanwhile, the horrors of Vietnam can be re-lived in *Lost Patrol*, (which just happens to feature on this month's STA front-cover disk). Top platform action is promised in the cute and cuddly *Rainbow Islands*.

In conjunction with the *Lost Patrol* Feature demo and the veritable booty of forthcoming releases, Ocean have set a competition which relate to some of their more recent releases. The prizes for the winners of this competition defy belief. The first name out of the sack with the correct answers to all three questions will win a Video 8 format camcorder. The next twenty five entries with the correct answers to be plucked from the postbag can choose an Ocean game of their choice. Impressive huh?

Entries should arrive by April 30th 1990. Send your form to:

**OCEAN COMPETITION,
ST ACTION,
LATHAM HOUSE,
QUARRY LANE,
CHICHESTER,
W. SUSSEX,
PO19 2NY.**

LOST PATROL

You are in charge of a unit of men whose morale has dropped to the pits. Your objective is to keep their morale up and guide them safely through Vietnamese jungles and villages. VCs are everywhere, snipers fire at you from trees and bushes and Charley units open fire in village ruins. You may also find yourself in a minefield and must uncover the mines to pick out a safe route. Also there is unarmed combat against lone enemy soldiers. *Lost Patrol* is a combination of strategy and arcade action - it's enough to make you sweat!

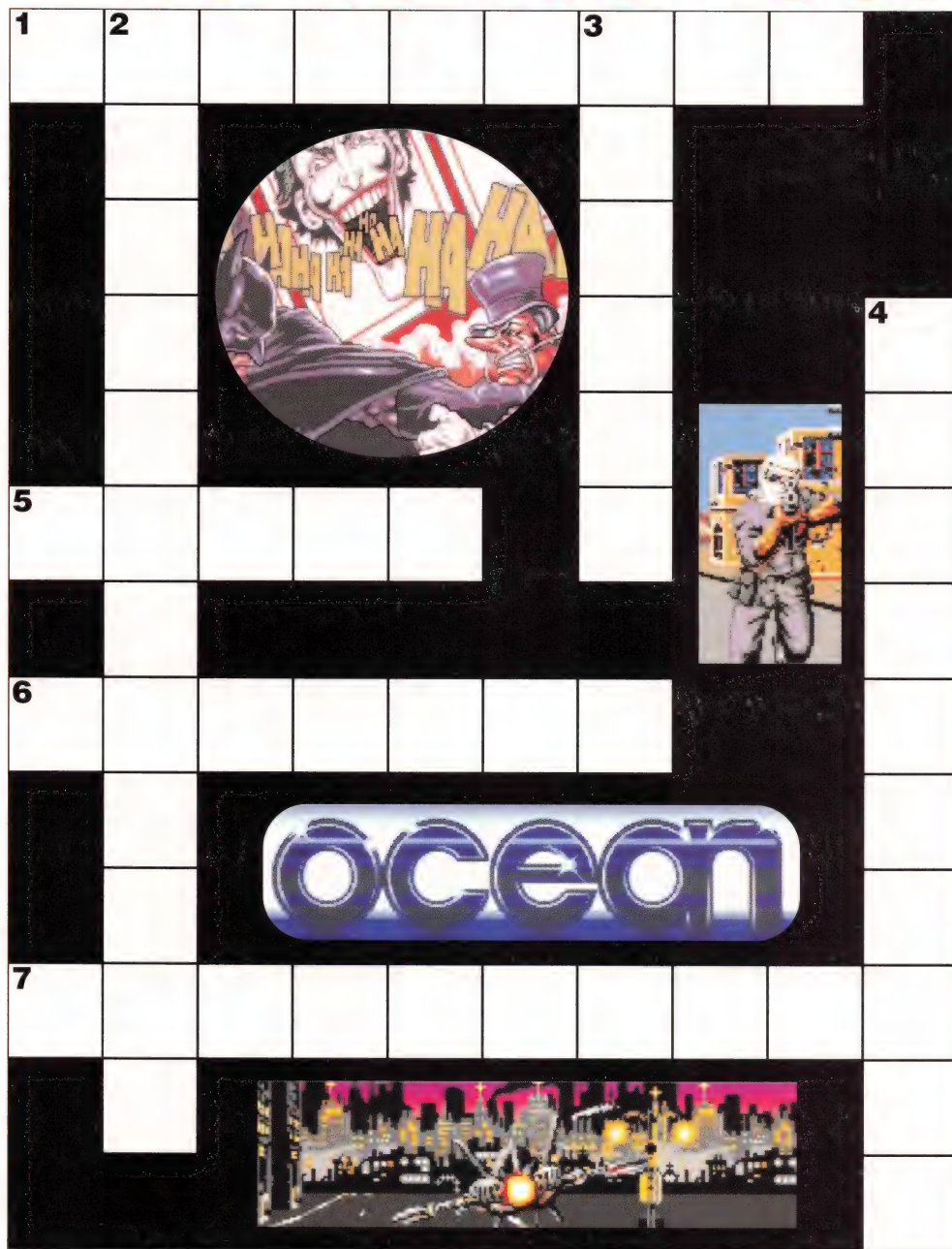
RETALIATOR

Leading-edge graphics in this aircraft simulation supreme where the skies are your hunting ground. You pilot an F29 through troubled skies in numerous and varied missions which encompass interception, attack, bombing, reconnaissance and exciting dogfight action. The 3D graphics create a realistic 3D environment which enhances the feeling of involvement in the game.

RAINBOW ISLANDS

Yep, that cute and cuddly duo, Bub and Bob, have at last made it onto the ST. Despite long winded legal battles, *Rainbow islands* is finally to be released by Ocean. This cute 'n' cuddly arcade game is pure addiction as you move your little hero up to the top of the screen using rainbows as platform. But watch out for the rising water. Can you survive the seven monster-infested levels and defeat the evil Baron Von Blubba once more? The fate of the islands is in your hands.

AND LOADSA SOFTWARE!



THE EXTRAORDINARILY EASY CROSSWORD CLUES

Clues Across

- 1 Name the two boys featured in Rainbow Islands.
- 5 Mancunian Software Supremos.
- 6 Richard of York gave battle in vain: anagram of initial letters.
- 7 F-29

Clues Down

- 2 Sean Connery won an Oscar in the film of this Ocean conversion, which ST Action scored 72% in issue 22.
- 3 Holy Games! It's the Caped Crusader.
- 4 Ocean's Vietnam adventure.

£500 WORTH OF SOFTWARE UP FOR GRABS

CHOOSE FROM

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT
RAINBOW ISLANDS
BATMAN - THE MOVIE
UNTOUCHABLES
BEACH VOLLEY
CHASE H.Q.
F-29 RETALIATOR
LOST PATROL

OR ANY OTHER OCEAN GAME

The above is my solution to the Ocean Competition Crossword:

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The Ocean game of my choice would be

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STAI

RAINBOW ISLANDS

There are seven islands in all in Rainbow Islands. As you reach other islands they will flash to indicate which one you are presently on.



STA Rating
78%

GRAPHICS: 77%
SOUND: 62%

LASTING APPEAL: 79%
ADDICTIVENESS: 80%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: 178766

"Take on the evil might of the Boss of Shadow as he attempts to turn the natives of Rainbow Islands into his doomed followers."

OCEAN (£19.99)

If you remember, we did in fact review Rainbow Islands in issue 17 of ST Action. The game was supposed to be released under the Firebird/Microprose label. Unfortunately, due to licencing problems, the game was never released to the public. Much to our relief, and yours no doubt, Ocean snatched up the vacant licence and have now released Rainbow Islands.

On returning from their previous adventures, two dragons, Bub and Bob, discover that their homeland, the Rainbow Islands, has been taken over by evil creatures and the nasty Boss of Shadow. On their previous quest the two dragons successfully completed the magic caverns and as a reward were transformed into a single human being again. The Boss of

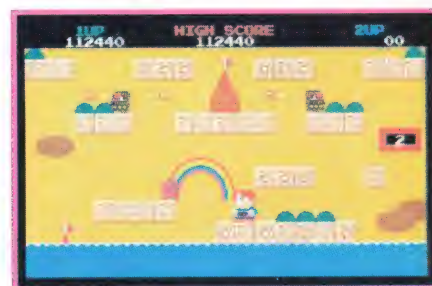
Shadow is intent on turning the natives of Rainbow Islands into his followers and slaves.

You control both Bob and Bub as a squat little boy dressed in dungarees. Armed with rainbows, the little boy must leap and climb his way up to the very top of the screen, picking up sweets and drinks as he does so. The sweets will allow him to accumulate a score. On reaching the top, a treasure chest full of yummys falls to the floor and showers the little boy with cakes, milkshakes and chocolate buns (with cherries on. Yum!). The rainbows can be used for climbing up the platforms or killing the baddies, who appear as spiders, crows, killer ladybirds and vampires, as well as other various meanies. At first, only single rainbows can be fired, but on picking up certain potions you can gain the power to cast two, and even three rainbows joined together; the speed with which you cast the rainbows can also be quickened. On reaching the top of later levels, you will be faced by an end-of-level monster. To destroy it, you must leap all across the screen and fire your rainbows. The monster will need to be hit several times before it finally dies. The first monster that you will encounter

is a giant spider that springs around the screen using a strand of web.

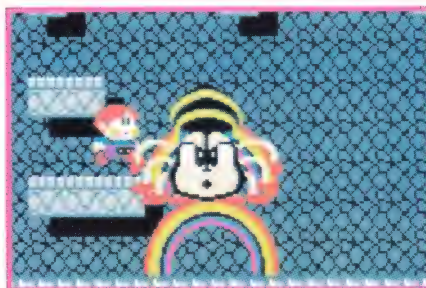
There are seven islands to fight your way through in Rainbow Islands, and each one consists of four individual stages - the play area scrolls vertically up and down the screen. The little boy is controlled via a joystick with the firebutton releasing the rainbows.

STA



Wait a minute, is this a classic case of deja vu? Yep, we reviewed Rainbow Islands way back in issue 17. However, because of the legal wrangle between Microprose and Taito, the game never actually made it to the software shelves. Thankfully, Ocean managed to strike a deal with the Japanese game giants. The result is one of the closest and most playable coin-op conversions ever. The game is brilliantly presented, colour has been used excellently and the cutesy graphics give added appeal. The sound effects are also crisp and pleasing, although I did become a little weary of the up tempo version of 'somewhere over the rainbow'. All in all, Rainbow Islands has lost none of its appeal and most self respecting ST gamers will love it.

NC



The end-of-level monsters come in many different guises, including giant spiders and blood-sucking vampires. To kill them you must hit them several times with your rainbows.

At last, it's finally here. Well, after the long wait, Rainbow Islands makes its appearance on the ST, and it has to be said that the game is just as good as when we reviewed it in issue 17. Cutesy-cutesy games nearly always seem to offer the best value for money in software these days, and Rainbow Islands is no exception. The graphics are superbly detailed, brightly coloured and well animated. The sound, which includes a main tune as well as the usual in-game effects, is also of a very high standard, although it can get a little tedious after a while. All in all, Rainbow Islands is an excellent game, and one that offers a great deal of long-term enjoyment.

SW

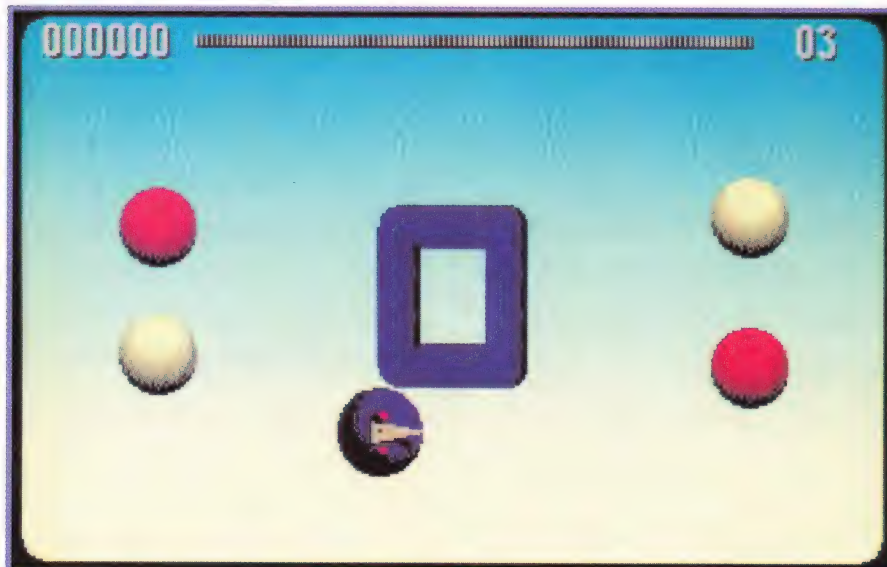
STAI

"Let it not be said that E-Motion is just a load of balls!"

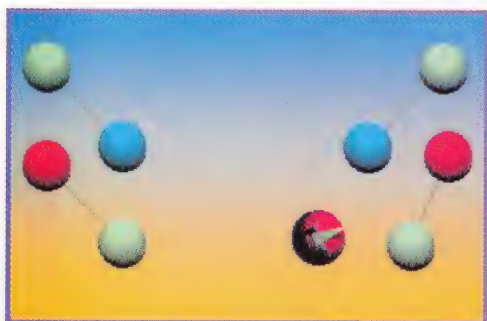
E-MOTION

US GOLD (£19.95)

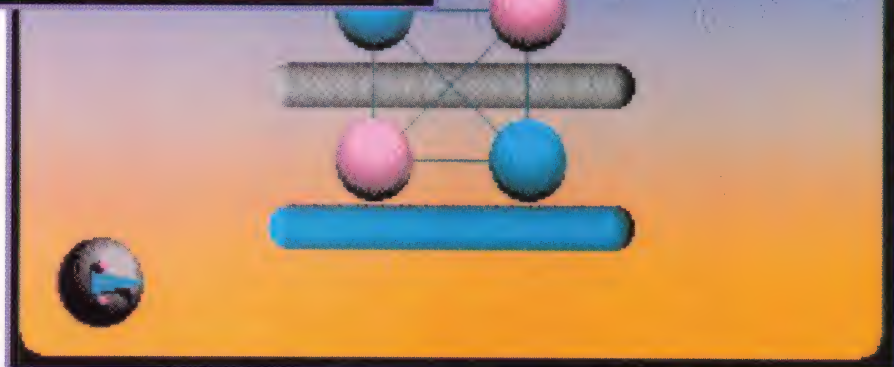
A relatively simple molecular set up to demonstrate the aim of the game. You control the probe sphere, which is the one with the beak and goggly eyes, and you must nudge coloured balls to hit like-coloured spheres to eliminate them from the screen. However, hit different coloured balls and you multiply your problem, literally.



I hated chemistry lessons at school, and one thing that really did baffle me was those molecular structure diagrams, 'This, Jason, is the molecular structure diagram of a plankton.' Well, of course, this knowledge was invaluable in my chosen career. To be frank, it all looked like a load of balls and string to me and that was my first impression of E-Motion - which just goes to show that first impressions can be deceiving. It is very rare that a totally original concept is released, and this is one of those odd occasions. on this occasion, E is for Emotion, a completely new type of challenge staged in the all-to-confusing world atoms molecules and particles. But for goodness sake don't let that put you off what is a quite unique mode of entertainment. You are in control of a single sphere a probe if you will a tool which you wield in many different molecular worlds causing havoc and possibly changing the structure of the body beyond recognition a tadpole into a fruit bat, a



Here, some of the balls are joined by elastic so that when you nudge one to hit another the attached ball swings around hitting all the wrong spheres.



gorilla into a slug perhaps.

The joystick controls the probe ball with thrust/inertia controls originally inspired by Asteroids and adopted by games like Virus and Blasteroids. The fire-button operates the thrust and you direct

the sphere with the joystick and you to tell which way it is facing, the sphere has type of beak. E-Motion is fifty levels of kaliedoscopic colour and confusion and each level has a different variation on the puzzle. On most screens, there are a number of



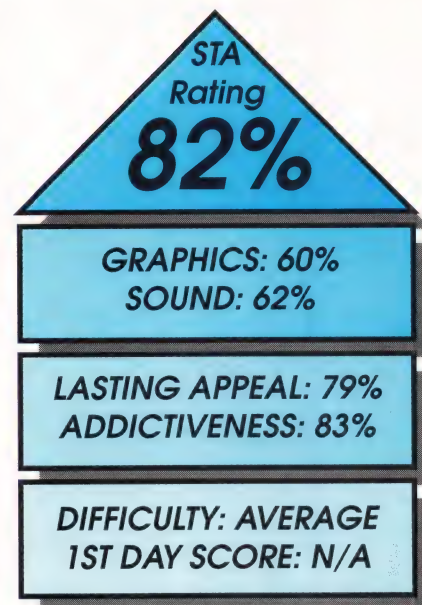
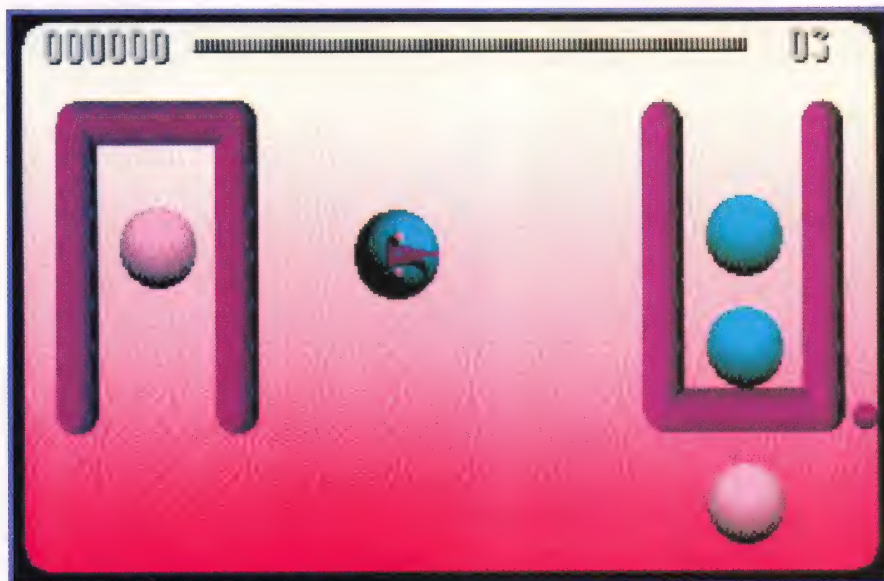
What make life even tougher is when your probe sphere has a ball attached to it. It doesn't matter how carefully you manoeuvre the ball, its unwanted companion swings around causing havoc.

Once again, The Assembly Line is the team behind a real gem of a game. E is for E-Motion and, in this case, it is most certainly for E-Njoyment as well. A thoroughly absorbing little game which is totally original. Billed as U.S. Gold's first in a New Age series of game, which is designed to be enjoyed without the stress usually associated with arcade games - in this instance, it works most admirably. You would have thought that the theme would be easily exhausted but there is not a hint of this in the fifty levels which feature here and I reckon that there's an infinite number of variations. It's a weird game which cannot easily be categorized. But what the hell, at the end of a long day its great entertainment

JS

Just look at this cat's cradle - this takes the game into the realms of impossibility.

As you can see, the actual structure of the screen plays an important part in the game.



coloured balls although the size colour position and characteristics are different in each screen. Generally, your objective is to manoeuvre your probe sphere about the screen and nudge like-coloured balls to collide with each other thus eliminating them from the screen. However, if you knock one coloured ball against another, the opposite reaction occurs as the probe creates and multiplies leaving you with an even more difficult job on your hands. All the time, each of the spheres is expanding and retracting under tension, threatening to explode which will blow your probe sphere into oblivion.

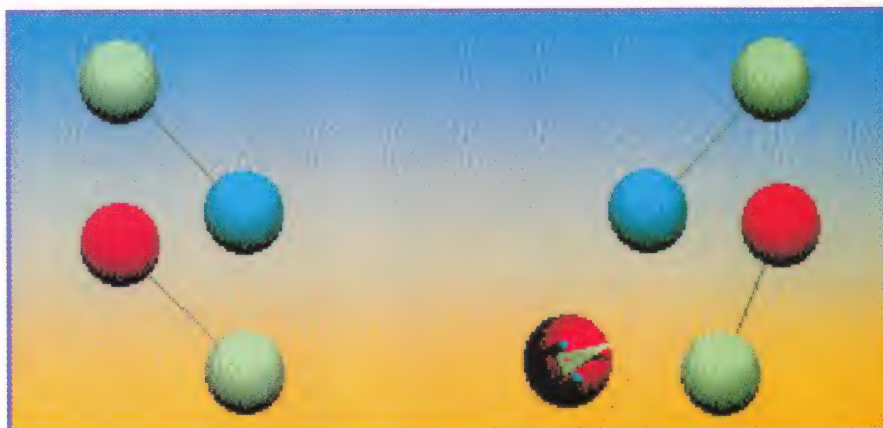
In each level, there is a different variation of ball position and some are joined by that elastic stuff, like the molecular structure diagrams. This increases the difficulty because as you nudge and bash a ball, the attached ball swings around threatening to hit other balls of different colours. Mostly, there are only two balls attached by the elastic, but sometimes there are numerous balls strung together which takes the clear up campaign into the realms of impossibility. What's even more infuriating is a level in which you are attached to another ball, and no matter how carefully you try and manoeuvre the

E-Motion has to be one of the most addictive games I have played this month. Although the graphics may look a little plain, the game itself is highly addictive and will soon have you hooked. Its only flaw is that the levels feature much the same purpose and start to become a little repetitious after a while. The graphics, although plain, are nicely coloured and well presented, the in-game sounds also being of a high quality, if a little weird. E-Motion proves, once again, that, sometimes, even the most basic of computer games can be the best and offer the most enjoyment. I found this game highly entertaining, and I'm pretty sure that you will. Buy it! Okay?

SW

probe sphere, your annoying protege always manages to collide with the wrong company. On some levels, this combination of spheres, strings and screen designs are taken to ridiculous extremes, but this variety of set-ups effectively pre-

sents a different challenge. But where the game really comes together is simultaneous two-player action with two bungling atomic scientist trying to make best of a bad job - it brings a whole new meaning to the phrase teamwork. So, that's E-Motion!



With titles such as Xenon II, Helter Skelter and Pipemania behind them, The Assembly Line have suddenly become hot property. All of their games have one, instantly recognisable, trademark - simplicity. Their latest game E-Motion is no exception. I mean, who would have thought a game in which all you have to do is knock balls about, could be so maddeningly addictive. How refreshing it is to find an arcade game that relies on good ol' gameplay instead of flash graphics and amazing sound. From the first second you play it until you switch off in sheer frustration, E-Motion will have you hooked. U.S. Gold have yet another classic on their hands and The Assembly Line can do no wrong - incredible!

NC



Finally, after fifty screens you are congratulated in an appropriate style - 'what a load of balls!'

Taxi off the runway and let your guns rip. As the bullets are fired, bombs will also be released. The bombs will take out any ground installations that may hinder your path.



Shoot'em-ups don't really seem to be advancing that much at the moment. *Scramble Spirits* looks extremely similar to a previous Firebird title called *Flying Shark*. The game is basically the same but with different graphics. Although these type of shoot'em-ups are good fun, they are nothing new and have been done before. The graphics are colourful but very plain in design, also becoming very repetitive through the six levels. Sonically, *Scramble Spirits* is adequate enough but with a little more effort, could have been a lot better. There are so many of these games around nowadays, my advise would be to look elsewhere.

SW

"The war had left Earth both weak and undefended. The people became refugees. Just as things were getting better an alien attack squadron appeared over the planet."

SCRAMBLE SPIRIT

GRANDSLAM (£19.95)

The war on Earth had left millions of people homeless. The governments were desperately trying to create some kind of order within the crumbling cities. But where would the people live? The cities were all but destroyed now and radiation was at a dangerous level, disease was rife. The only answer lay in the third world countries which had been untouched by the war. The people were gathered together and transported to these barren countries while construction workers hurried to build massive domes and cities. Things seemed to be going well and the evacuation went smoothly and without hitch. But the weakened planet was to become a prime target for alien invaders and already

an alien attack formation had appeared from nowhere and was about to attack Earth's weak defences. The only chance was to send up old and dilapidated World War II bombers which would have to bear the brunt of the attack.

Leaping into your bomber, you switch on the rotors and taxi off the runway. No sooner are you up when the first formation of enemy spaceships attacks. Using your bombs and bullets you wipe out the formation - the bombs hit gun installations which are scattered all around the ground. Add-ons can be collected on the plane carriers, but only if you destroy them. When the plane carrier blows up a tiny plane appears and swirls around the play area, waiting for you to pick it up. The plane, when collected, will tag along with you and double your firepower. At the end of a level your bomber will land and you will be given the chance to accumulate a bonus reward. All the sprites are magnified in the bonus stage so that they are

Now, just where have I seen this game before. Okay, so *Scramble Spirits* is a lesser known Sega coin-op. Unfortunately, it's too similar to a number of other titles. Namely, U.S. Gold's conversion of the Capcom coin-op, 1943 and Firebird's excellent conversion, *Flying Shark*. However, to be fair, *Scramble Spirits* does have a simultaneous two-player mode. Graphically, the game boasts few strong points and the sound effects are a little lacklustre. The game is fun to play for a short while, but its long-lasting appeal is questionable. For me, it's only the inclusion of the two-player mode that lifts this decidedly average shoot'em-up out of the realms of mediocrity.

NC

easier to hit. For each one you destroy you will be rewarded with points. As you progress further on in to the levels, the enemy formations grow larger and more deadly than before. Within *Scramble Spirits* there are six levels to beat, each one has its own distinctive look and individual nasties to annihilate. There is also an option for two players to play *Scramble Spirits* simultaneously. This should make your bomber's task a little easier. **STA**

STA
Rating

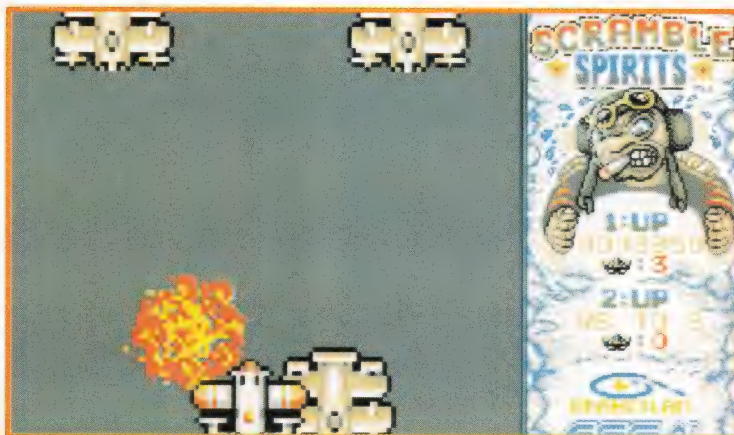
61%

GRAPHICS: 52%
SOUND: 53%

LASTING APPEAL: 57%
ADDICTIVENESS: 61%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

The bonus stage consists of firing at the magnified enemy. Shoot as many of them as you can to gain a hefty bonus. Move from left to right and keep that fire-button pressed down.



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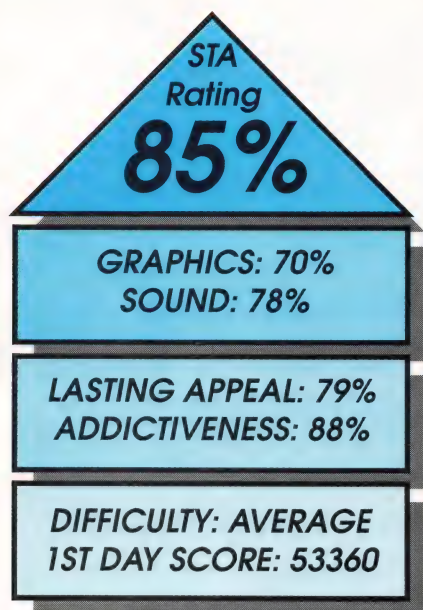
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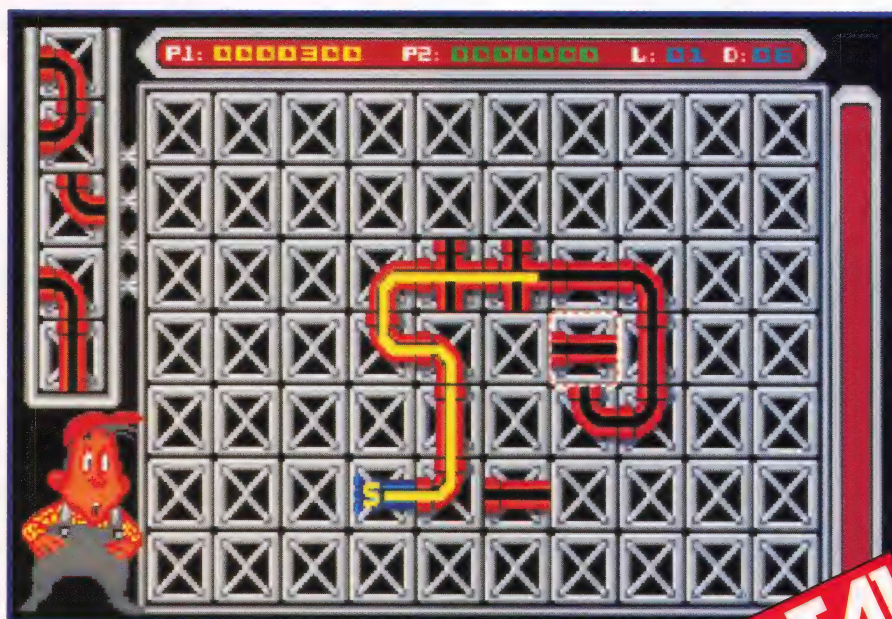
* PLEASE NOTE NOT ALL THE TITLES IN THE FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS SECTION MAY BE RELEASED AT THE SCHEDULED TIME, THESE WILL BE DESPATCHED WITHIN 24 HOURS OF RELEASE SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY



Here's a game that will really make you sweat, and those of a delicate disposition might even develop a twitch. Yes, this is a game with pressure, suspense, agony, fear and pure fun. "Can you think under pressure?", the scenario asks with more than a hint of truth to it. It continues: "Have you got what it takes to be a manic plumber?". Conceptually, Pipemania is a very simple game which features pipes and a liquid called Flooz which is produced by, who other than Acme. On their own, pipes and Flooz sound like pretty boring commodities, but combined, they add up to a mass of fun and seemingly limitless variety. The objective of Pipemania is quite straightforward. At the start of each of the thirty six levels, you are presented with a clean construction screen. Each level has a different theme and a variety of hazards and obstacles to overcome. To the left of the screen are five boxes, each containing various sections of pipe. The calm before the mayhem! Somewhere in the pipeline construction area is a starter pipe marked with an 'S', which is the outlet for the Flooz that is about to flood out.

At first, all is peaceful. But the suspense-filled atmosphere is so thick you

A simple pipe construction designed for the plumbing apprentice. Using the joystick, you plan a basic pipeline using the pieces and sections which appear in the bottom box. Once the time runs out, the Flooz runs in.



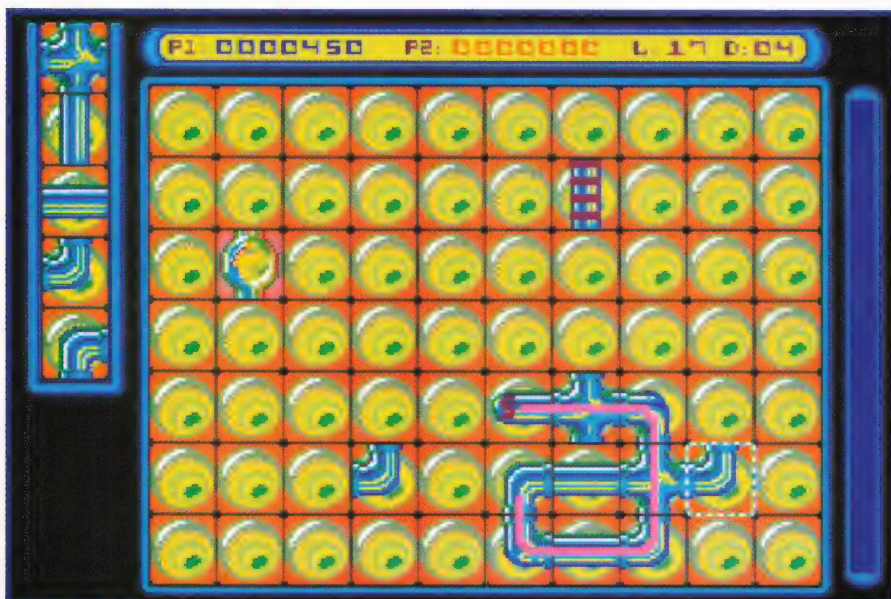
PIPEMANIA

"If you think that plumbers just crawl around the bathroom floor with their trousers halfway down their backsides, then Pipemania shows a whole different side to the job."

EMPIRE £19.99

could cut it with Paul Daniels. The timer ticks away the seconds to the Flooz flood and you must make the most of this brief stay of execution if you want to stand the slightest chance of stemming the flow of the tide. The Flooz is gushing towards the construction screen and with the joystick, you must lay a pipeline structure in readi-

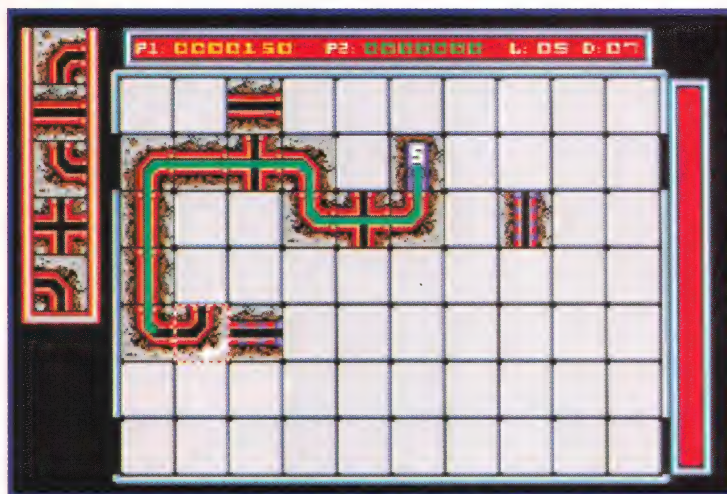
ness for the flood. Beginning with the source pipe, you move a highlighted section around the screen with the joystick and pressing the firebutton lays the pipe. However, you have no choice but to place the piece of pipe which is at the bottom of the boxes. As you place a piece the one above drops down and you must find a



If you manage to loop the loop, you gain a bonus score. Meanwhile, the potholes are very effective in thwarting the pipeline.

Pipemania is solely responsible for at least fifty lost man hours in the STA office - everyone here has fallen in love with the game! What a perfect idea for an arcade game! It's so accessible and easy to play and there's enough variety to keep you glued to the screen for literally hours. Pipemania is, without doubt, the most successful original arcade concept we've ever played, and I cannot recommend it enough. With Pipemania, The Assembly Line have established themselves as a leading design group who can turn their hand to a wide variety of games - meanwhile Empire have proved themselves as pretty shrewd cookies. To sum up the game, Pipemania is perfectly simple and simply perfect!

JS



place for that section and so on. You can, however, change the pipe section for the next bit by pressing the firebutton again which blows up the existing pipe and replaces it with the next piece. You can do this indefinitely although you incur penalty points. The key to Pipemania is planning ahead by placing corners apart from each other and meeting them up with straight bits and generally using the available part to its best advantage.

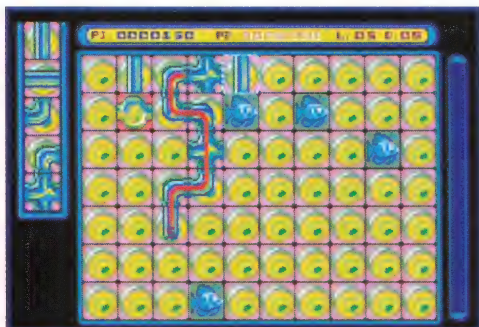
The first few levels are quite straightforward - a sort of plumbing apprenticeship. But suddenly, you're faced with all sorts of hazards and obstacles which really put an edge on the game. For example, a construction screen may be fraught with potholes, which you must build the pipeline around to bypass what could be a major Flooz catastrophe. Another level

and you're faced with one-way pipes which, like their name suggests, will only allow flooz to run through them one way. On some levels the Flooz travels at a faster pace giving you even less time to form the pipeline.

Every five levels, there's a bonus level which changes the game completely. Here, bits of pipe appear at the top of the screen and you must drop them into place to form the pipeline. There are many hazards

in Pipemania but there are a few features which are designed to help the fraught plumber. In some of the more difficult levels reservoirs fill up with Flooz giving valuable time to construct a pipeline. Also, there's bonus pipes which give you a slight edge on the game when Flooz rushes through. But with, or without, these few support features, the game is never short of frenetic.

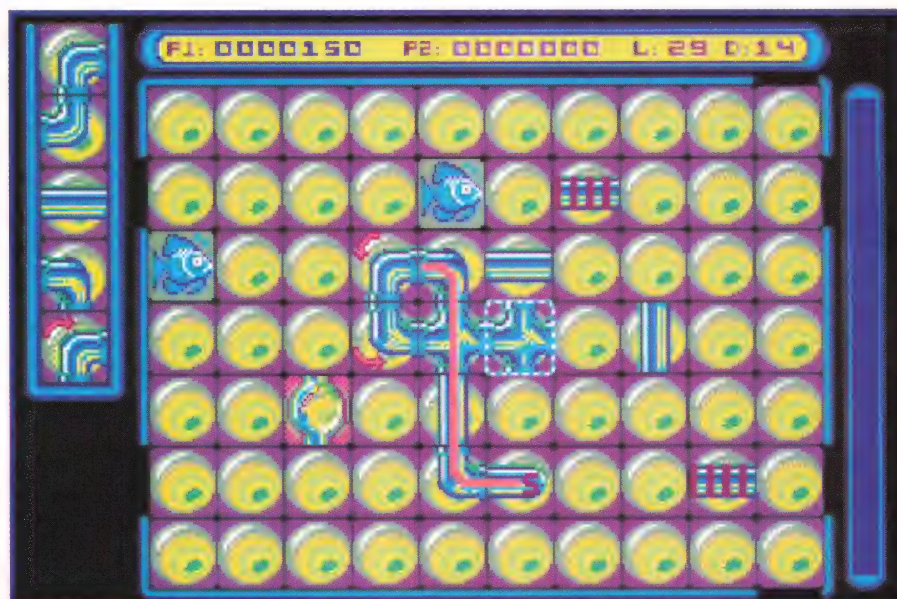
STA



The manic plumber's life is never dull. As you progress through the levels, it gets increasingly difficult to create a pipeline and avoid a flood.

Pipemania is one of the most simple game ideas I've ever come across. However, don't be fooled by that. Although Pipemania is a really basic game, it's one of the most frustrating and compelling I've played. The graphics are big, bold and colourful. The programmers have thought of everything and the overall design is near perfect. I was particularly impressed by the sound. The tunes are catchy and the noise of the ever-advancing flooz is quite panic inducing. Without doubt, Pipemania is one of the finest ST games ever. Worthy of a place in any collection, Pipemania must be a candidate for game of the year - and we're only in April!

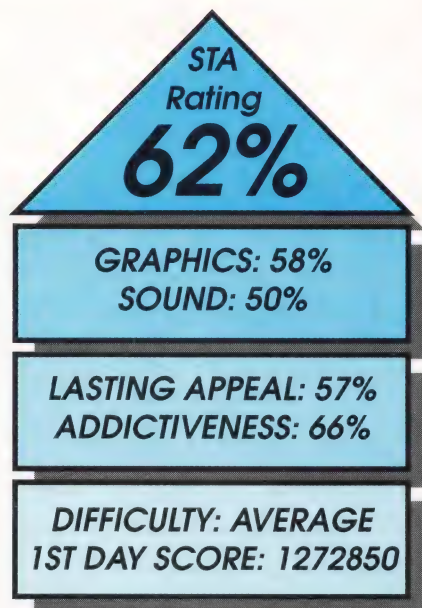
NC



Each level has different hazards and obstacles and an original theme. Many of the ideas were inspired by Lucasfilm Games Ltd.

What with Never Mind from Psygnosis, Pipemania adds another new twist to the near snapping genre of puzzle games. Puzzle games seem to offer an almost endless scope of ideas for computer games, and each new release seems to offer something new. This philosophy certainly rings true for Pipemania. The idea of laying down pipe to continue a flow of liquid may sound a little boring, if not a little strange. Never fear, Pipemania is an excellent game and incredibly addictive, and nerve wracking. The graphics are simple but effective and you are kept on your toes constantly by the thumping beat that accompanies each stage. Pipemania is definitely worth the asking price. Don't miss it.

SW



As the end-of-level guardians appear, our loyal Space Harrier must pump as many shots into their weak spots as possible, whilst simultaneously avoiding their deadly fireballs. Success then grants our hero access to the next stage.



"It has been a year since the red-suited hero of the

Space Harrier wars has seen service, but now he is coming out of retirement as Grandslam release their conversion of the Sega coin-op, Space Harrier II."

SPACE HARRIER II

GRANDSLAM (£19.99)

'Welcome to the Fantasy Zone.' That was the greeting arcade-goers were met with almost three years ago. When Space Harrier first arrived, it was met with a decidedly favourable response. Assuming the role of the last surviving member of the Space Harrier Corp, you had been assigned the task of clearing the twenty-four levels that made up Fantasy Land of

the mutant oppressors that had overrun it. Once again, Fantasy Land is under attack, and the twelve levels that now comprise the lush paradise have been invaded by all manner of organic and robotic creatures. Behind the invasion is a menacing renegade of your old corp, the Dark Harrier, and your ultimate aim is to infiltrate his domain at the end of the twelfth stage and end his menace for good.

You begin the game standing on a device that allows you to beam into any one of the twelve landscapes and, once you have selected your battleground, there will be a brief pause and the game will commence. Your red-suited hero is controlled via either the joystick or the mouse, with the directional controls sending him circling around the screen, whilst the firebutton sends a bolt from his powerful laser burning into the screen. The aliens attack in formation from the distant horizon and from behind, and send huge hoops of deadly firepower at you. Avoiding these and the many ground-based obstacles that threaten to take one of your five lives, you must return the fire until you eventually make your way to the huge

end-of-level guardians that the Dark Harrier has left to protect new territories.

As you approach the guardians, they fill the screen with their deadly firepower, whilst you try to find their weak spots with your laser. Each of the mega-nasties weaves in and out of the screen; you are given but a few seconds in which to score several direct hits before they perform another circuit. However, once several shots have hit home, the creature will eventually explode, allowing you access to the next sector. **STA**



Making the game considerably harder are the many ground-based hazards, such as rocks and metal poles.

The original Space Harrier was a pretty decent game which, although it couldn't possibly reproduce the stunning sprite animation of the arcade nor compensate for the all-shaking of the hydraulics, at least it portrayed the general gameplay. Presentation aside, however, I criticised the game for its lack of variety and questioned the longevity of its appeal. So I'm surprised that they could squeeze enough out of the theme to justify a sequel. Frankly, except for a few different sprites and attack routines, this is, for all the world, the original Space Harrier. Also, I understand that the original is being re-released by Elite along with the data disk which was once sold separately - what's going on here? My advice is to compare the two before you buy because, personally, I'm baffled!

JS

Comparisons are bound to be made with Elite's original, and, unfortunately, this sequel is a pale shadow of the original conversion. The graphics have been made larger and are now slightly better animated, but the new, improved sprites give the game a cluttered appearance, and make manoeuvring tricky. In addition, the sound is very weak and limited to a few tinny bangs and whizzes - hardly the roaring sound of the original! A disappointing conversion, especially when you consider how old the Elite game is.

NC

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WAYNE GRETZKY HOCKEY

At last, a rival to Anco's excellent Kick Off football game. Wayne Gretzky features everything you will ever need to enjoy Ice Hockey on your ST. Although, ultimately a simulator, the arcade element has been included to make the game easier to get into. The violent nature of Hockey has been captured perfectly, with digitized fight sequences and a veritable array of options to make Hockey totally flexible. The rink-graphics are small but neatly presented, with some humorous little touches here and there. It also seems that the sound has been digitized, from the blowing of the ref's whistle to the cheering of the crowd. Wayne Gretzky Hockey is totally addictive and, I'm sure, will appeal to all types of gamers.

SW

"Lace up your pads and tie on your ice-skating boots because you're going to be participating in the roughest sport on ice - and everything goes."



The teams line up for the face off. As soon as the puck is freed, try and get to it before your opponent does. If you foul him, he will be awarded a free face-off.

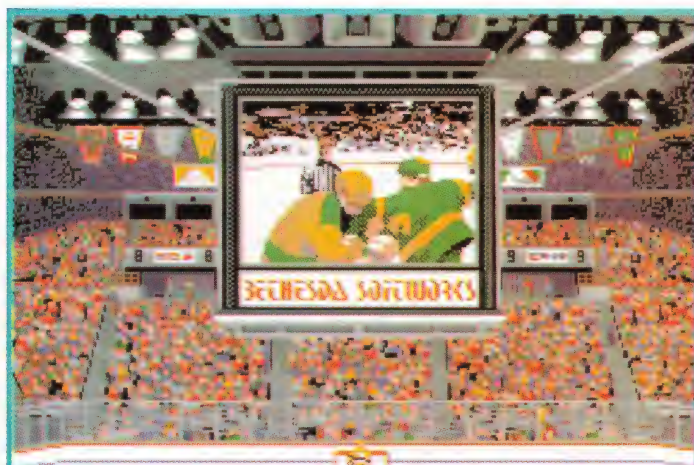
BETHESDA (£19.95)

The sport of Ice Hockey has always thrilled its audiences with its speed of play and, sometimes, violent nature. All the various thrills and spills are present in Bethesda's, Wayne Gretzky Hockey. The main menu allows you to toggle the style of play, your own personal team status and any other features relevant to your game. You can choose to be a player or a coach, there is also an option to play both. Four team levels are available in Wayne Gretzky - from High School to Pro. If you want to get deeply into the simulation side of Wayne Gretzky Hockey then

you can alter your team's layout. There are three lines of formation in Hockey. These include; even lines, power plays and penalty killing. Even lines occur when you have the same amount of players as the opposing team. Power play comes in when you have more players than the other team. This will give your team a powerful advantage in the game. When the opposing team has more players than yourself it is a penalty killing. There is even an option to see how Wayne Gretzky might assign your team to the 18 lines. You can save and load your finished team to and from

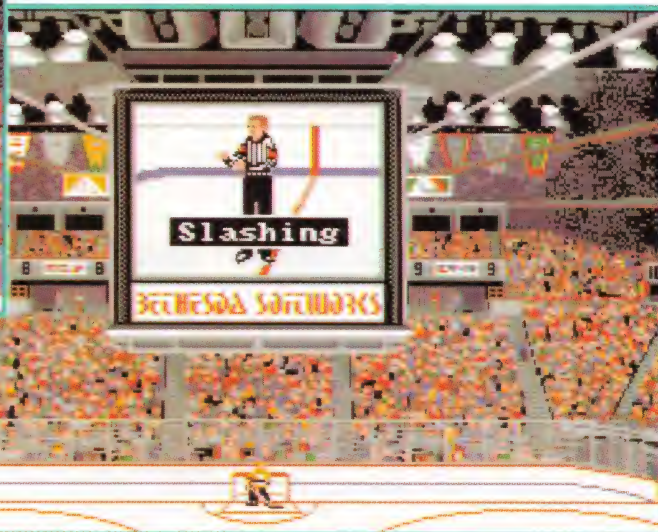
tumble it out with the opposition. If you do manage to get yourself into a brawl then you will be treated to a cinema-style view of the ensuing scrap. Be warned though: fighting does not go down too well with the ref, and penalties may be awarded. Fights do not normally occur at levels below professional, so it is best to switch the fight option off when playing at any other level apart from pro.

Once you are satisfied with all the features of your game you can then select to play. The match begins with the face-off. As soon as the puck stops flashing, it's time to swing that stick, and hopefully whack it into your opponents half. The player under your control sports a natty white helmet for instant recognition. Control of the player on the ice can prove a little tricky at first as the turning radius



The greatest treat of the whole game has to be the fight sequence. You can't actually control your player in the fight, so just sit back and enjoy the ensuing battle. Great stuff.

Fouling your opponent doesn't always go unnoticed, and the ref may penalize you. Although he doesn't appear on the actual rink, he will make an occasional appearance near the barriers.



Billed as the best ice hockey game, (not exactly impossible to achieve), Wayne Gretzky's put his name to an enjoyable team sport game which combines a great deal of detailed analysis with uncomplicated and easy-to-use game. What makes this different from the many overhead soccer games, apart from the obvious, is that you can play as one player in a team which is otherwise computer-controlled team which is quite a new experience in computer sport. My main criticism is the screen switching abruptly from a side-on to an end-on view of the rink which really interrupts the flow of the game. Why the Bethesda didn't get the screen to scroll smoothly with the game we'll never know but physically this effect is not impossible.

JS

isn't as sharp due to inertia. When another member of your team has control of the puck you can ask for a pass by standing still and pressing the firebutton. The other player will then pass the puck on to the stick of your player. Players can bar-rack each other against the barriers, trip one another and even start full-blown riots. Should you do so, your player will be penalized and eventually sent off, leaving you with a reduced number of players. As each foul is called, the referee will appear and show the type of foul that was committed. These include charging, hold-

GOAL! You can watch the goal over and over again by selecting the instant replay option. Beware of the opponent's defenders, as it can prove fairly tough to break through them.



ing, tripping, hooking, slashing and elbowing. There are also basic fouls that can be called, such as off-side, icing the puck and passing the puck from one zone to another. As the game progresses, fresher players will be sent on to the rink as the previous line may eventually tire. It is, therefore, essential that the lines be placed in their correct order for maximum effect.

Should you manage to score, you will be instantly treated to a fanfare of trumpets as well as the cheering of the crowd. If you so desire, you can even view a replay of the entire set-up and eventual goal. Mouse or joystick can be selected to control your player.

STA



When any of the players are fouled they fall to the ice in a heap. A whistle will be blown and a penalty called.



Whenever a foul is called or someone scores a goal there is a timeout. Control then returns to the main menu. Here you can toggle your game statistics before playing, again.

Wayne Gretzky's Hockey shone in many areas but I'm afraid I remain unimpressed by it. The game comprehensively covers the brutal sport of ice hockey, however, the most important aspect, the game, proved tedious and rather slow. I liked the added extras, such as the fight sequences, but what with the flip screen pitch, it all proved too much. The sound effects, too, seemed sparse and bland, especially as the subject matter offers so much scope. The two-player mode added interest to the game for a while, but the overall feeling was one of disappointment.

NC



At the sound of the final whistle, the players - tired and battered, skate off the ice rink and head towards the showers. Will you keep the same formation for the next match.

STA
Rating

66%

GRAPHICS: 67%
SOUND: 65%

LASTING APPEAL: 70%
ADDICTIVENESS: 68%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

There is definitely something addictive about sliding-block puzzles, and it has to be said that *Never Mind* is the best I have ever seen. The different planes of orientation add a new twist to the genre and, therefore, increase the game's overall appeal. The graphics are simple, yet effective, being both well drawn and nicely coloured. The animated pictures are particularly effective. Sound hasn't been neglected either, and a tense, atmospheric tune keeps you rushing to beat the time limit. If puzzle games are to your liking, *Never Mind* will be sure to keep you enthralled for some time, although boredom may creep in eventually.

SW

The chess piece will slide over your picture and disrupt all the tiles that you so painstakingly placed earlier. Try and fence him in by blocking his path with floor tiles.



If you thought that sliding-block puzzles were tricky, wait till you get to grips with *Psychapse's* latest brain tester - *Never Mind*. The game adds a new twist to the ageing, but entertaining, process of sliding blocks in order to create a finished picture.

The blocks are placed by directing your player - a warrior-type character - over the tiles and then picking them up. You must then direct him to the position

As a rule, I enjoy strategy and puzzle-style games. It was with great anticipation that I awaited *Psychapse's* *Never Mind*. Now, having had the chance to play the game for quite some time, I'm left feeling a little dissatisfied. The graphics are exceptionally well presented, the 3D isometric environment works really well and the puzzle-pictures are highly detailed, too. I found the sound a little lacklustre, but nothing that really detracted from the overall game. The problem seemed to lie with the main objective of the game. Rearranging the pictures is all very well for the first few screens, but after that I started to look for something more. Okay, so there are various obstacles and obstructions, but it's still not enough.

NC

Some of the puzzle-pictures are animated, making your task even harder. The tile that you presently hold is displayed, at its true angle, in a window to the top-left of the screen.



"Can you solve some of the most challenging puzzles ever to be found on a computer and become brainbox of the century?"

NEVER MIND

PSYCLAPSE (£24.95)

that you want the tile to be dropped and press the fire button. It will then be placed beneath your character's feet and the tile it replaces will be collected. But, of course, things are never this simple and *Never Mind* has a few secrets up its sleeve. There are three planes in which your player may walk. Obviously, certain surfaces cannot be walked on if their position is incorrect to your own and so warp tubes have been strategically positioned around each level which allow you to walk on a new plane. Warping is necessary as some of the picture tiles are at different angles, and all need to be collected and placed if the picture is to be completed. As you progress through the two-hundred and fifty levels, the pictures themselves become a great deal more complicated, sometimes requiring you to complete two at once.

There are various hazards to hinder your progress. Giant chess pieces make an early appearance in the game and attempt to disrupt your picture. This can prove infuriating as you are always trying to beat a rapidly decreasing time limit. Luckily, certain tiles can be picked up and

used to block the wandering chess piece so that you can complete the level without hindrance. Dissolving tiles and transporter tiles also make an appearance in later levels.

Each room comes with a password that you can type in at the beginning of the game for instant access. To the right of the screen are several icons that can be enabled via the mouse pointer. The 'H' icon allows you to view the finished picture for just a few seconds - useful if you have no idea what you are trying to complete. The 'P' is a standard pause control, while the '?' will reveal the password. Time remaining is displayed in bar-chart form to the top of the screen, along with your accumulated score.

STA

STA
Rating
63%

GRAPHICS: 58%
SOUND: 43%

LASTING APPEAL: 63%
ADDICTIVENESS: 69%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A



At last, you made it! Once the picture has been completed you will be rewarded with a bonus, the amount depending on how quickly you managed to solve the puzzle.



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Don't be misled into thinking that Sherman M4 revolves just around hardened strategy. The game has been perfectly matched with the arcade element too. Although there is a strategic basis, it can be just as much fun charging around and blowing up anything that comes within range. The menu screens have been designed with a great deal of care and attention - the tank displays being of a very high standard indeed. The graphics, designed in solid 3D, move realistically and smoothly and increase Sherman M4's realism tenfold. The sound isn't anything to shout about as it is a little sparse. Still, this does not affect an otherwise excellent product. Sherman M4 should appeal to both strategists and arcade fans and offers plenty of fun and action.

SW

You begin each mission at the controls of your Sherman M4 with the rest of the battalion to either side of you. Pushing both controllers forward will make the tank advance.



After the prolonged 'good luck' speech, Sergeant Buck handed out the orders, turned sharply on his heels and exited the briefing room. On reading the brief, you jot down your bearing and attack strategy. The target is to be a supplies-line bridge to the south at map-reference B-3. You inform the rest of your battalion of the mission and eventually climb into your tanks.

Pushing the control sticks forward, the metal beast begins to pull away from the HQ along with the four other tanks

STA
Rating

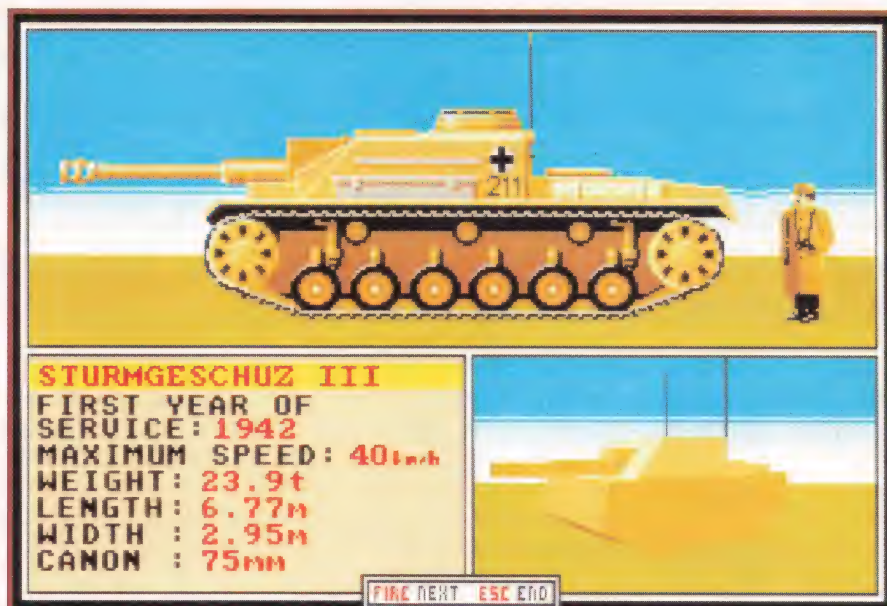
77%

GRAPHICS: 74%
SOUND: 48%

LASTING APPEAL: 76%
ADDICTIVENESS: 80%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

All the tanks that appear in Sherman M4 can be viewed in spectacular 3D. It is wise to take note of their design as you don't really want to destroy your own tanks.



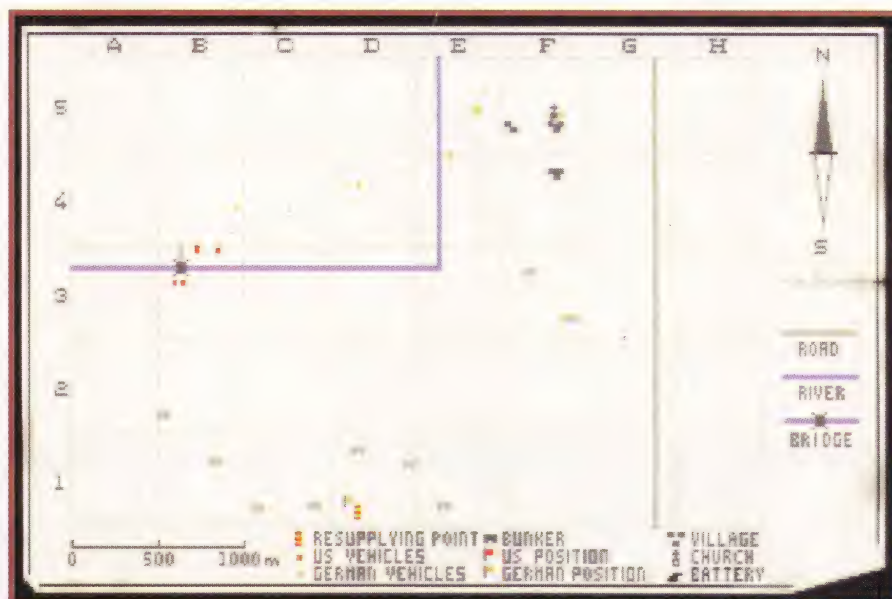
SHERMAN M4

"As the driver yanked, desperately, on the controls of his Sherman M4, a great cloud of dust spewed from the tracks. The enemy tank was now in range!"

US GOLD (£19.95)

and two reconnaissance jeeps. Suddenly, a mighty explosion tears up the ground in front of you. Close shave. You issue your orders to the others and immediately take evasive action yourself. On looking through the binoculars out of the top hatch, you spot a German Panza tank. Lining up the site and turret, you fire one of your own shells. A direct hit - the

enemy tank burst into a ball of flame and becomes motionless. Your battalion, once again, regroups and heads on toward the bridge. On consulting the map, you discover that the bridge itself is heavily guarded - more Panzas. Tanks two and three take the left flank, while one and four trundle off to the right. No sooner are the Shermans in place than tanks one and



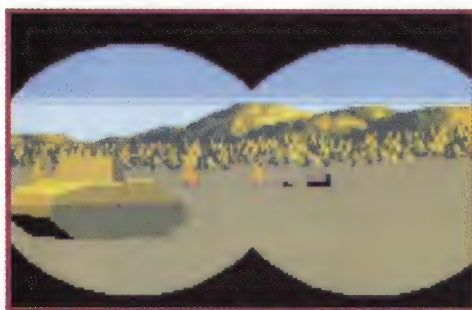
With your directive noted, you must seek out your target on the map and select the route that each tank and jeep will take. German Panzas are indicated by orange pips, American by red.

If you require a better view of the proceedings you can look out through the top hatch. The direction of view can be switched using the function keys.



three receive direct hits. Both are reduced to burning shells. You swing the turret round to the bridge and fire. With the bridge finally disabled you reverse your heading and head for home. On returning safely back to HQ, you receive the customary congratulations from Sergeant Buck. Your reward - a new mission.

The world of Sherman M4 is represented in superb 3D, with all the vehicles moving both quickly and smoothly. There are three campaigns to choose from, each comprising of five different tasks to complete. The three are; Normandy; Ardennes and the Desert Campaign. There is also an option for viewing all the tanks, both American and German, in 3D. All the specifications are also included for reference. Once your campaign has been



Prepare yourself for any conflict by looking through the binoculars. This will magnify your field of vision and reveal any hidden tanks before you actually reach them.

Apart from Rainbow Arts' excellent Conqueror, there aren't any tank related games on the ST. Therefore, it's difficult to compare Sherman M4 with anything. Personally, I loved the game. It's a subtle blend of straightforward blow-the-suckers-to-bits and battle-field strategy. The graphics consisted of both vector-style polygons and sprites. The update, meanwhile, proved to be both smooth and fast. Sonically, the effects are good; the rumble to the tank's engine and the sound of shell-fire all helped add atmosphere. I particularly liked the option to fight in different campaigns; the change of scenery added extra enjoyment. Overall, Sherman M4 is a great little game, a simulator that's uncluttered by picky detail and unnecessary key-presses - Excellent!

NC

A welcome change from the usual aircraft cockpits which feature in the dozens of flight-sims available, this latterday Battlezone offers enjoyable, if a little simplistic and unrealistic action. Enough tank blasting action can be gained out of the game to warrant serious consideration, although I was desperate to get out of the confines of the turret and find some variety after an hour or so. Presentation is rather pleasant, with the two gloved hands steering the tank and a realistic-looking terrain scrolling through the turret window. Sound effects are a bit wet, but I've heard worse. All in all not a particularly subtle or detailed game, but ultimately enjoyable to play.

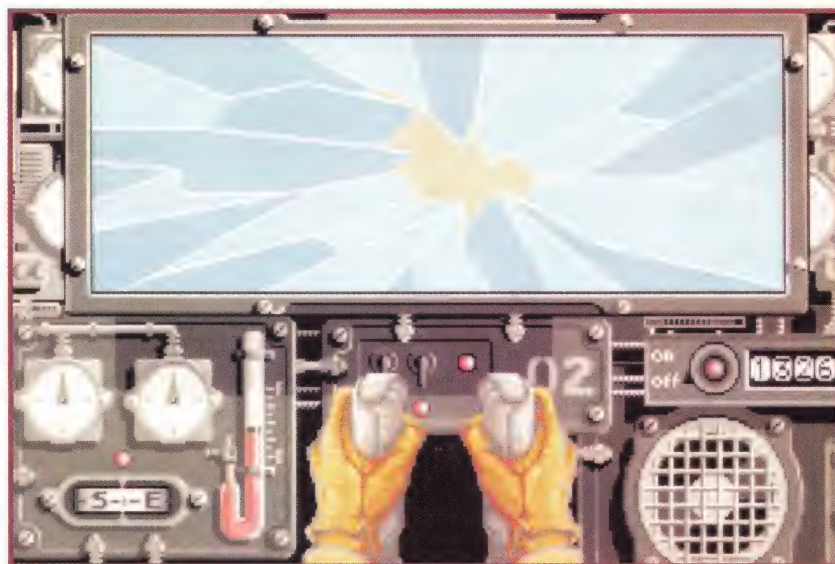
JS

selected you will enter the campaign menu, from which you can toggle all the mission statistics to suit your requirements and experience. There are various options to make your task a little easier - unlimited ammo, unlimited fuel and fast loading. With the scene set, you can now begin the mission. Your task will be displayed as well as any other information that may be vital to the completion of the mission. There's no turning back now!

You can have up to four tanks and two reconnaissance jeeps under your command, which can be controlled by pressing their appropriate number on the keyboard. Control begins in the cockpit with you driving the tank, although it is possible to stand in the top hatch and view the surrounding terrain from all angles. The

binoculars prove useful for seeking out any enemy that may be out of range. Unless various 'unlimited' options have been selected, your tanks may eventually run out of fuel or ammo. Refuelling and re-arming will require a visit back to your HQ. All placing of vehicles is executed via the map which displays the positions of all the enemy and any buildings within the near vicinity. Each tank has a destination-pointer that can be moved around the play area. By pressing the firebutton, the tank will move to its designated location. The map itself can be scrolled up and down by moving the joystick in the same way. The mission ends when, either all four tanks are destroyed or the mission is completed successfully.

STA



Bang! If you stray too close to any of the enemy they will mercilessly attempt to blow you up. Your tank can take a certain amount of damage before it is disabled permanently.



The play area is littered with villages and churches. It's not wise to waste your ammo on useless targets, unless there is an enemy tank hidden behind one.

The gems that Beppo must collect vary in size. The larger ones are worth ten points, while the smaller ones are only worth a measly one point. Collect them all to access the next level.



"Take Beppo the clown on a fantastic journey around the gem-filled landscape of a mysterious land as he attempts to make his fortune."

CLOWN'O'MANIA

STARBYTE (£19.95)

For years Beppo the Clown had thrilled audiences with his hilarious antics and jovial humour. Clown 'O' Mania follows the adventures of the cute red-nosed clown called Beppo. One night, Beppo was making his way back to his dressing-room caravan, when he stumbled across a tatty little map which contained instructions on how to reach a magical gem-filled land. Seeking a way out of the circus, Beppo decided that he would attempt to find this secret land, but he had no idea of what would be in store for him. Once there, he found that the land was, in fact,

a series of seventy platform-based islands, each of which was filled to the brim with diamonds and deadly creatures. Controlling Beppo, you must avoid the scuttling creatures that patrol each stage, while collecting every gem on the islands. Once you have successfully stolen all of the gems, you will be warped to the next level.

Beppo's task is made easier due to the fact that he can use certain features of the landscape to his advantage. Wandering across some of the levels, Beppo will encounter walking razor blades which, when collected, allow him to shoot any assailants. In addition, Beppo can also pick up small pyramids which will either kill or stun the attacking nasties on contact. If all else fails he can outsmart them by either trampolining up to a higher level, taking a power pill which will temporarily clear the stage of nasties, or by sliding



The bonus stage contains several different coloured slabs which Beppo can walk on. If he changes all the slabs to the same colour, Beppo will be rewarded with a 10,000 points bonus.

The gameplay involved in Clown 'O' Mania is both hectic and great fun and although the graphics are a tad repetitious they are nicely designed and very cute, the levels being varied enough to keep you interested. A thumpy tune accompanies the game throughout and makes up for the mediocre in-game effects. The game itself features some nicely programmed twists, such as the when the screen turns upside down. The flip screen scrolling did become a little confusing at times and I often lost my orientation. Clown 'O' Mania offers some great short-term enjoyment, but I can see it becoming a little boring after a while.

SW

By stepping on the patterned plates the whole screen will be turned upside down. This proves useful if things are getting a little too hot right-side up. Eventually the screen will return to its normal position.



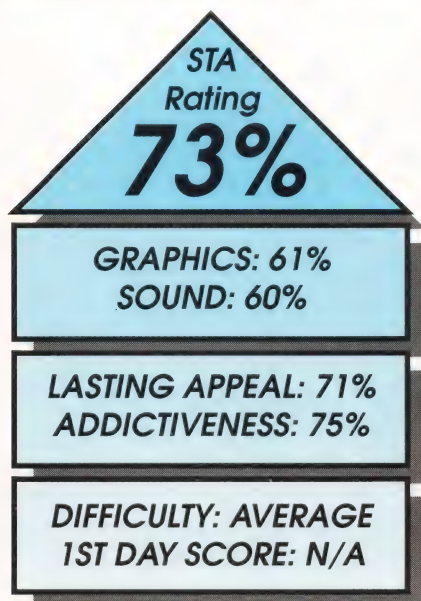
down a funnel to a lower section of the screen.

Beppo begins the game with five lives which are represented by an energy bar. Contact with certain creatures will deplete this bar, while others will kill him instantly - either way, Beppo's death sees him spinning off the screen, only to reappear a few seconds later to have another go. His energy can be increased by collecting energy boxes which will add ten units to the bar. If the nasties don't get Beppo then the time limit may. Extra lives can be found in the shape of clown masks which, unfortunately, do not appear that often. Should you lose all five lives it will be game over and you will have to start at the beginning of the game, once more.

STA

A cross between Pacman and Crystal Castles, Clown'o'Mania offers a modicum of playability. It doesn't really have that much lasting appeal, but for a while it is addictive fun, and I enjoyed certain elements of it - especially the strategic thought required on later levels. Graphically, the game is very attractive, but this pleasant effect is almost totally ruined by the glitchy and eye-straining scrolling which judders all over the place. An average release which, with polish, could have been a great little game.

NC



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DAY OF THE PHARAOH

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RAINBOW ARTS (£19.99)

Everything that you will need to climb the ladder of success is controlled here at the main menu. The menu is divided into three sections - Economic menu; Play menu and the Social menu.



On a cold and dark night, during the flooding of the Nile, approximately 4000 years ago, the Egyptian Pharaoh passed away, thus leaving the throne of all Egypt with no heir. The great gods argued over who should claim the now vacant throne. Seth - the god of all evil - believed the throne should be placed in the hands of the most powerful men in all of Egypt. He therefore commanded all dominant Egyptians to kill any possible heirs and, in return, they would be given the title of Pharaoh - king of all Egypt. One heir was saved from the killings by the sun god - Amon-Re. He was looked after and brought up by the workers on the bank of the Nile. A young prince had survived and was now ready to return and reclaim his throne.

You play the part of the Egyptian

prince and must attempt to reclaim your throne. Amon-Re has awarded you with silver and a ship to help you in your quest. As a simple peasant and trader, you must sail the high seas and the surrounding area in an attempt to trade items and accumulate wealth. You must first choose and pray to a god and bring various items to please him. As you climb up the social ladder you will be able to hire a consultant. The consultant will aid you in times of trouble and give you advice and hints. You may set up stores in the different cities in and around Egypt, but to accumulate any wealth you must first build a fleet of ships. The quickest, yet most dangerous way to acquire goods, is to wage war on the Hyksos, Bedouins or Nubians,

Despite the annoying disk swapping, I rather liked Day of the Pharaoh. I was particularly impressed by the game's digitised graphics. Colour has been used to good effect and the overall presentation is excellent. The various tunes that accompany the action seem to have been digitised from classic film but, although they seemed to capture the overall atmosphere, they did sound a trifle muffled. The actual gameplay consists mainly of strategic and logical thinking. The various arcade sequences, my favourite being the repelling of the Phoenician thieves, serve as a welcome break. All in all, Rainbow Arts have scored a hit with Day of the Pharaoh - a real challenge.

NC

shoot arrows from your charging chariot and kill all the enemy soldiers. Should you be hit by their spears you will lose one of your chariots. You only have three chariots to begin with, although more can be built as you accumulate your wealth and your social acceptance becomes greater.

Trading is a dangerous business, and the seas are full of many unexpected hazards, like rocks that will crush your ship, and Phoenician thieves who will attack your vessel and steal your trade should they board. When you decide to set sail with your goods, you will be able to choose your passage on a large map of Upper and Lower Egypt. By using the mouse controller you must choose your direction by selecting the passage arrows. When sailing, your journey time is displayed in bar form to the top of the screen. Steer

STA
Rating
70%

GRAPHICS: 63%
SOUND: 63%

LASTING APPEAL: 70%
ADDICTIVENESS: 70%

DIFFICULTY: AVE/HARD
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A



Before you start accumulating your wealth, be sure to visit your local temple and pay your respects to your chosen god. Honour his name with gifts of worth.

No sooner have you set sail with your precious cargo when greedy Phoenicians attack your ship. Smack them back into the sea with the oar.



If I described this game as an adventure about ancient Egypt, you'd probably think 'Drone, drone, boring, boring!' Hang on though... this is rather good! The game combines social issues such as; building and architecture, business and monetary concerns, religion and war, and the whole thing makes for engrossing entertainment. Great use has been made of hieroglyphic icons, and the structure of the game, which switches from comprehensive strategy screens to animated action, works very well. All in all, a game well worth consideration by serious adventurers/strategists.

JS

your ship skillfully, as the seas are full of rocks. If you get hit by three of these rocks your ship will founder and your cargo will be lost forever. On reaching your destination, your ship will enter the port amidst a fanfare of trumpets. You will then be able to trade your goods with the locals. At some ports, providing you have a worthy enough cargo, you will be approached and asked if you would be willing to bet your cargo on a camel race. This is a good opportunity for you to acquire some wealth, that is providing you

win the race. Eventually, you will be able to marry into a wealthy family - but choose your bride wisely. As your wealth increases so shall your social acceptance and your ability to build monuments to honour your chosen god. Now is the time to go to the Pharaoh's Court where you may state your claim as the true heir of Egypt.



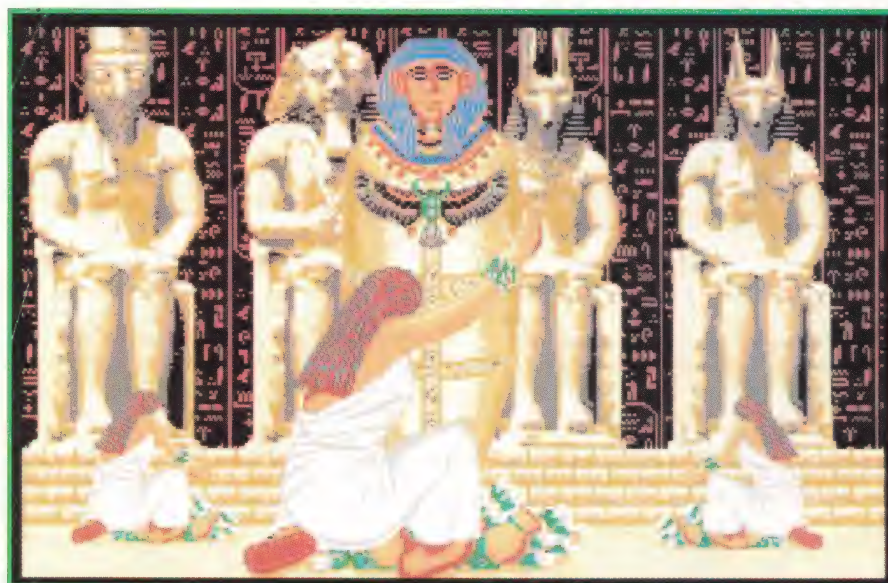
Wealth is accumulated by trading with other ports around Egypt. You may only trade items if the particular city visited requires it.



As you charge along the parallax landscape the enemy hurl their spears at you. Return their fire with your bow. Shoot down all the enemy and you will be rewarded.

Although the constant loading necessary in *Days of the Pharaoh* was somewhat annoying, the game itself was very good indeed. The graphics are colourful, extremely atmospheric and make full use of the ST's abilities. Although most of the scenes are static, the game relies more on strategy than pretty pictures and manages to blend the two perfectly. The sound seems to have been digitized straight out of an Egyptian epic and adds to the game's overall appeal, although it does become a little repetitive at times. If you're in need of something to tax your brain and keep you thinking, then definitely take a look at *Days of the Pharaoh*.

SW



Oh dear! Your wives mourn your failure, knowing that all of Egypt will be doomed to the greedy fingers of the foreigners. Will Egypt ever be great again? Of course it will.

The Nile acts as life-blood of Egyptian society. Starting from your home port, you must pilot your barge down the treacherous river. The longer the journey, the greater the danger.

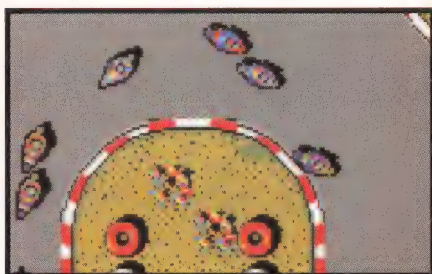


GRAND PRIX MASTER

Race games seem to be all the rage at the moment, but I have to admit that *Grand Prix Master* failed to impress me. The graphics, although well presented, were small and very sparse. The scrolling-around-the-track option was useful and nicely programmed but the rest of the game was mediocre. As for the roar of the motorcycle - it sounded more like a fizzy. The control system also proved awkward to get to grips with and I regularly found myself crashing into oil drums and hay bails. There just wasn't enough variation to keep my attention for long and therefore I became bored very quickly.

SW

And they're off! Manoeuvring around the track can prove tricky at times. Some of the corners are very tight indeed and expert control of the brakes is definitely required.



Grand Prix Master gives you the chance to become one of the best, if not THE best, motorcycle racing champion in the world. With up to seven Grand Prix races, you will racing against the best of the rest. The Grand Prix tracks available to the rider are; Holland, Spain, Portugal, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Germany and Yugoslavia. Each track comes with its own specifications, including the length of

STA
Rating

56%

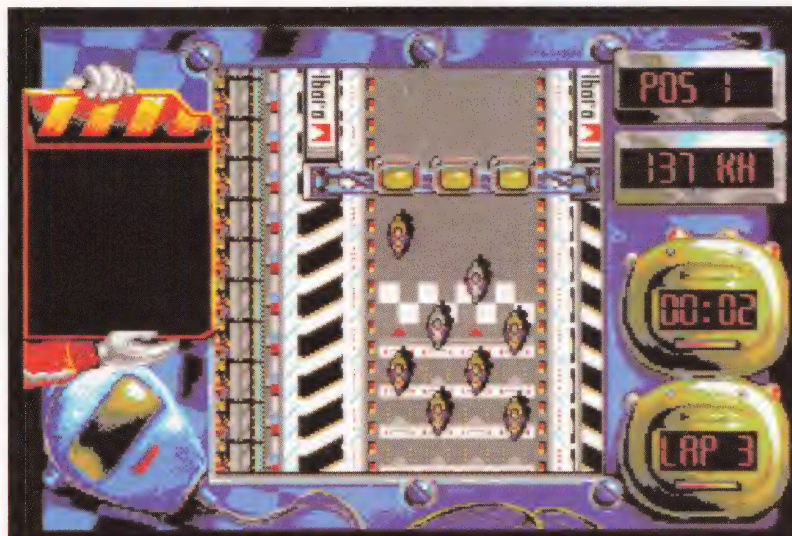
GRAPHICS: 49%
SOUND: 48%

LASTING APPEAL: 49%
ADDICTIVENESS: 54%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

"Burn rubber around seven of the world's most deadly motorcycle tracks as you attempt to become a true Grand Prix Master."

DINAMIC (£19.95)



All eight riders, as well as yourself, line up at the starting grid ready to burn rubber. Make sure you avoid the other riders when pulling away, as this may cause a crash.

the track and the fastest lap ever recorded. Before beginning a championship race you must prove yourself worthy by racing a qualifier, against the clock. Sounds easy does it? Think again. These eight other racers are experts and are all intent on claiming the number one position on the starting grid - pole position. The qualifier screen is displayed in the form of a scoreboard. On the upper part of the scoreboard you will see the times performed by the other riders, as well as the time it has taken you to complete each lap. You may race around the qualifier track for as many laps as you think are necessary before you are able to gain a satisfactory time.

Once you have successfully qualified, you will be shown your position on the race track relative to the other eight riders. If you make it to the pole position you will be allowed the choice of starting on the inside or outside. Watch the starter lights carefully and when they switch to green let the clutch out and burn rubber. As you race around the winding and twisting track, you must control your bike both sensibly and carefully, taking great care to brake, with the firebutton, when you reach those hair-raising corners. Should you spin off or get hit by another motorcyclist, your bike and rider will become just another insignificant splotch on the tarmac. You will then be informed of how many

bikes you have left. The chequered flag will be waved on your final lap as you cross the finishing line - hopefully somewhere near the front. Your finishing time, and other such status information, will be displayed as well as the amount of points that you have won.

The various menu screens in *Grand Prix Master* contain several options that you may select before you begin a race. You can choose to practise on the present track, enter the qualifier or just scan around the track. This option allows you to view the track from various position, helping you to become acquainted with the track before you actually decide to race in the championship.

STA



The chequered flag will wave you on to your final lap. One bad move here and your dreams of the championship could be shattered.

With graphics that would be impressive on a Spectrum, I thought that *Grand Prix Master* would rely more on playability than presentation. Unfortunately, it doesn't even have that. Nothing about the game is impressive, and although there was some compulsion to go back to it, in the end the limited playability got the better of me and I was looking for something else. A decidedly average release that isn't really worth any consideration.

NC

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- ST WORLD, September 1989



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PLAYER MANAGER

STA
Rating
76%

GRAPHICS: 60%
SOUND: 40%

LASTING APPEAL: 80%
ADDICTIVENESS: 75%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

"Anco rose to the top of the table with Kick Off. Now, they turn their attention to the more serious task of management."

ANCO (£19.95)

Division Tables							
Division 1		Division 2		Division 3		Division 4	
CLUB	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
WIGAN	9	7	1	1	9	3	22
CARDIFF	9	5	3	1	12	3	18
SHREWSBURY	9	5	2	2	8	2	17
ROTHERHAM	9	5	1	3	8	5	16
ST ACTION	9	3	6	0	6	1	15
HUDDERSFIELD	9	4	2	3	12	8	14
FULHAM	9	3	2	4	4	5	11
NORTHAMPTON	9	2	3	4	11	9	9
READING	9	2	3	4	5	8	9
PRESTON	9	2	2	5	4	9	8
BRISTOL	9	2	1	6	2	15	7
BIRMINGHAM	9	1	0	8	6	18	3

Done

Each division comprises of twelve teams. Here, we see ST Action placed near the top half of the league. With three points for a win, they'll soon be at the top.

So, you reached the big time, you've played for a top, first division team and even represented your country. As you slip into your golden years, you have two options left open to you: either you hang up your boots and retire on your pension, or enter the highly competitive field of team management. You discover that a small, third division club are looking for a Player Manager and, wanting to prove there is still some go left in you, you apply for the position.

Down on their luck, and in need of a minor miracle, the third division team sign you up as their new Player Manager. Your first week comprises of champagne with the board of directors, headline news in the papers and pre-season training with the lads. Eventually, Saturday and the start of the season arrives. The first fixture of the year is a home game against

last season's promotion candidates, Reading. An almost capacity crowd has turned out at Latham Gate to see your first game. Proudly, you lead out the boys. The town's clock strikes three and the referee blows his whistle to start the game. Play starts at a blistering pace and the midfield battle really starts to hot-up. Suddenly, the Reading skipper floats a ball into the area and Steve Thompson (last year's leading goal-scorer) nods the ball into the back of the net. From then on the match becomes quite one sided. Reading pop another past the keeper and you feel quite relieved when the half-time whistle sounds. The stern pep-talk in the dressing room and the orange slices appear to do

the trick. As the second half gets underway, the ST Action strikers surge forward into the enemy area. The Reading defence hold solid until you manage to send young Colin Stepson (the twenty-one year old ex-latheworker from Cheltenham) streaking down the wing. Beating off two challenges from the defenders, Colin lets fly with a ferocious volley. The Reading keeper dives to the right, but the ball blasts into the back of the net. "Goal!", roar the crowd.

Despite pulling one goal back, ST Action lose two goals to one. As you trudge from the field, you overhear the crowd mumbling. "Don't know why we

Finances		
Previous Week	In	Out
Brought Forward	105	
Players Bought		0
Players Wages		4
New Contracts		0
Interest		0
Other Expenses		0
Players Sold	0	
Match Earnings	29	
Cup Match Takings	0	
Sponsorships	0	
Other Earnings	0	
Totals	135	4
This Week		
Current Balance	131	
Overdraft Facility	150	
Total Available	281	
Manager's Career Figures		
Players Bought	246	
Players Sold	103	-143

Done

Anco's Kick Off is one of my all-time favourites. I've seen more than my fair share of soccer-management games and, personally, even the most comprehensive of them leave me feeling bored. No so with Player Manager. Combining the compelling gameplay of Kick Off with the strategy of team management was a stroke of pure genius. Graphically, the action game hasn't changed at all, while the various tables are easy to read and understand. The gameplay is as exciting as ever, the league system making play even more competitive; I particularly liked the option to play in position. Player Manager is the finest football game available on the ST. Even if you've already got Kick Off, try this one out, it's magic!

NC

Success on the field must be matched with success at the bank. Buy too many players and your club will go into the red. Stay in the red too long and the board may want your head.

The burning question is, how could Anco possibly improve on the best soccer game of all time, Kick Off? Amazingly, that's exactly what they've done. Not only does Player Manager contain the excellent and even enhanced soccer action from Kick Off, it also has a football manager, coaching and team tactics section which is infinitely more playable than the other more stuffy footy manager games available. Finally, there's a football game which rewards you with really enjoyable game action after all the fussing around with managerial decisions. Football management isn't everybody's bag, but combined with great footy, this really is a must!

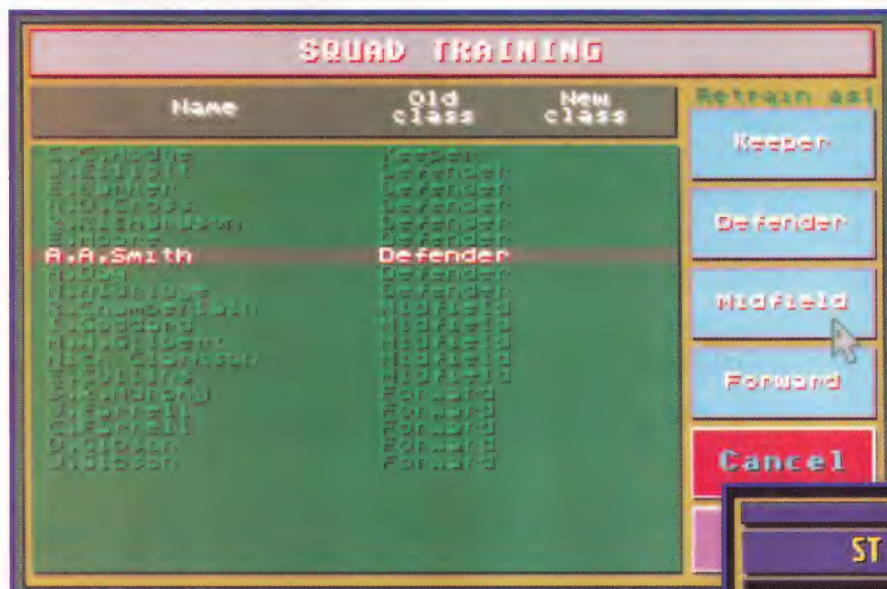
JS

The presentation in Player Manager has to be the best I have ever seen in any football management game. The menus and option screens have been well designed and are extremely easy to use. But don't think that it ends there. Remember that fantastic football game - Kick Off? Sure you do. Well, Kick Off has been included in Player Manager and therefore enhances the management side of the game tenfold. The managerial aspect of Player Manager has been created perfectly without being boring. If you are in to football management games then Player Manager is the one for you, and with the inclusion of Kick Off you can't really lose.

SW

Squad training is essential. Watch your team members carefully, they may not be playing at their full potential in their current position.

At the end of each game, the score is displayed. Complete with details of goalscorers, injuries and bookings. ST Action should have scored more. Still, one - nil will do.



bothered with him... he never was much cop". The board of directors put it down to pre-season nerves, you vow to prove them right.

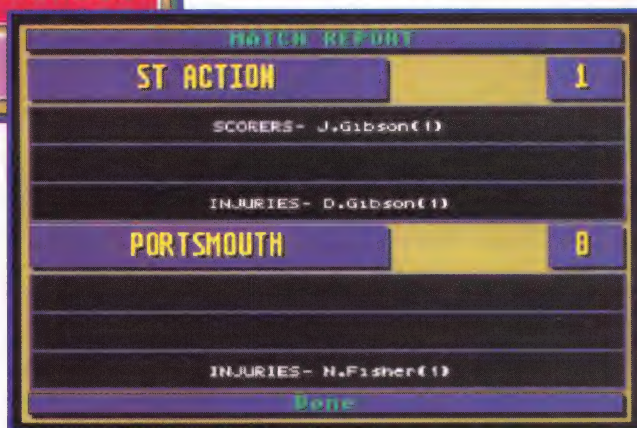
Player Manager is the natural progression from Anco's best selling soccer game, Kick Off. Most soccer management games offer great tactical and strategic gameplay, but very little action. Using a specially designed variant of Kick Off, players can actually determine the outcome of the game without having to rely on computer-generated results. At the beginning of the game, the computer calculates each individual's attributes and arranges the four league tables.

When everything has been sorted out, your statistics are displayed. Of course, you're entitled to change either your own or your team's name; the position you play is predetermined. Should you decide to actually play the matches, you must decide whether to control the whole team, a la Kick Off, or simply to play yourself.

At the start of the season your rating with the board of directors stands at fifty percent. As the weeks pass, your rating will either increase or decline depending

on the team's performance. Naturally, the key to success is in preparation. For this reason, it's possible to select the coach option. Here you may retrain players in new positions, administer extra training or, to boost morale, let the boys off of the rigours of midweek exercises.

Having made any transfer deals, trained your squad, etc., you may select to actually play your next match. Of course, the game does allow players to simply let the computer decide on a score. However, most people will want to get stuck in and play the Kick Off-style match. Each half lasts for three minutes, with extra time added for stoppages. The arcade gameplay has been sharpened up a little, but essentially it's the same. During



the game, should any player receive a red or yellow card, his disciplinary record is noted. Being sent off during a game means an immediate two week suspension.

Naturally, both league and cup titles can be won. Combine this with the constant pressures of injuries and the like, and you can begin to understand that being a Player Manager is no easy ride.

STA



Should you find yourself on the end of someone's boot, you could sustain a painful injury and find yourself out of the squad for weeks!



Using the tactical editor, you can pre-position your players so to make the most of free kicks, corners and the like. Here, a goalmouth scramble is about to result in a goal!

STA
Rating
68%

GRAPHICS: 68%
SOUND: 50%

LASTING APPEAL: 68%
ADDICTIVENESS: 68%

DIFFICULTY: AVERAGE
1ST DAY SCORE: N/A

Many of the objects within Rock 'n' Roll cannot be reached and this is where the icons will come in useful. The pickaxe icon will repair any holes in the floor.



You take control of the marble-like object, which must roll around the mazes solving puzzles and collecting items that have been scattered around. Unfortunately, most of the items are locked behind gates. These gates can be opened by keys which are also found lying around the play area. The keys come in different colours and only open doorways that correspond with that particular colour. Confused? Thankfully, your ball is not totally helpless in his quest. Icons can be collected which will bless him with special powers and make him impervious to certain pitfalls

As Rock'n'Roll loads, you are treated to a rendition of a not-so-well-known rock classic. Unfortunately, the ST doesn't seem to do the tune justice and I soon found myself reaching for the volume knob. Luckily, the same cannot be said for the game itself. Rock'n'Roll is a puzzle-orientated game that reminded me of the Marble Madness/Boulder-style games. The graphics are well defined and colour has been used to good effect. I liked the option whereby I could use my mouse instead of the joystick. At the end of the day, Rainbow Arts have created an enjoyable and compelling puzzle-style game that kept me enthralled for ages.

NC



As soon as the game has loaded you'll be treated to a concert from the famous Rock 'n' Roll band (never 'erd of 'em). As the intro music plays, each musician bashes and twangs away at his personal instrument.

"Can you Rock 'N' Roll your way through 32 levels of utter mayhem? You've no legs, no arms and no head. Sounds tricky does it? Well, don't worry - your spherical, armoured shell should see you safely around the many mazes - you hope!"

ROCK 'N' ROLL

RAINBOW ARTS (£19.99)

along the way. Parachutes, repair kits, bombs and armour are all available, and when purchased, the icon will display 'SOLD'. The total charge will be deducted from your account, which can be boosted by collecting the money icons. Should you attempt to buy an add-on and find that you don't have the sufficient funds, you can make the purchase by sacrificing some of your energy.

As you progress through the levels, each icon's use will become apparent. The repair kit, for example, proves useful when repairing holes in the floor. Fall down one of these holes and you'll lose one of your precious lives. Ouch! Should you manage to stumble over the edge, you might try using the parachute icon. The eyes will

allow you to view a map of the actual zone you are presently on. The more eyes you collect, the more of the map you will see. All of your collected keys and enhancements are accessed via the control panel to the bottom of the screen. There are other hazards to be found, such as acid and ice, which will make your ball slide all over the place. A spiked-ball enhancement should prove useful! Each different maze must be thought out carefully as certain pathways run in only one direction.

The ball itself can be controlled via the mouse or joystick, as can the icons to the bottom of the screen. Some of the zones have to be completed within a certain time, which is displayed to bottom-left of the screen, along with your present score and the hi-score. There is also a record status for the fastest zone time.

STA

"Oh no! Not another marble-type game", I hear you cry. Marble games seem to have had a new lease of life recently, and there's no doubt that Rock 'n' Roll is one of the best to date. The graphics are nicely detailed and brightly coloured, each object looking pretty self-explanatory, although a little more animation here and there would have been nice. The sound is simple but effective and more than adequate for this type of game. The 32 levels should keep you amused for quite some time, although it may become a little tedious later on.

SW



Certain areas of the zone are inaccessible without the keys. As a new door opens an extra key is found. Unfortunately, some of the keys are hidden away and may take a while to find.

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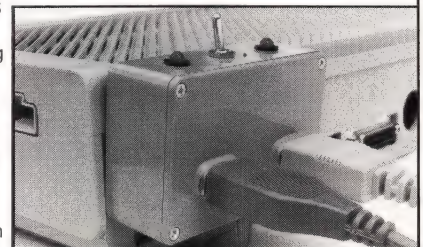
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YAK'S YAK

Greetings, fellow Atari-freaks... I'm just recovering from a truly exceptional Saturday night; a mate of mine who has a Swansea synth band (called Medium Green, watch out for them) has just acquired a new stage laser, and he had it set up in a warehouse in Swansea. He invited me down to see it and we spent all night in there listening to very loud Rush and freaking out on this laser. It's the closest thing I've ever come across to a proper commercial light-synth; you have a little flight deck with a keyboard on which you can assign patterns to each key; you have potentiometer controls which can be used to alter the parameters controlling the laser in realtime, and even a sequencer. To a committed light-synth freak, the device is a dream come true. If I could get one of these in my livingroom I'd never use Trip-A-Tron again! Unfortunately there's not much chance of that; I'd need about twenty grand to buy the laser, plus a heavy-duty 3-phase power supply to run it, water-cooling for the laser heads, and a living room about 20x bigger than mine to set up all the mirrors...

Anyway, if you hear of Medium Green on tour anywhere, go out and see them, because I guarantee the laser show will be great, and as well as the laser they run a pair of Trip-A-Trons on projection video screens. The music's good too!

Back in the real world now, the most significant ST event for me this month was the arrival of Devpac Developer. I've had this a couple of weeks now and I'm really pleased with it. After a couple of days setting it up I started to use it in earnest and before long I could feel it becoming indispensable. First and most importantly you can assemble up your code and download it into a remote machine for execution. This means that even if you utterly crash the machine running the code, your source code and assembler is safe and sound in the master machine; no more having to reboot and reload the assembler and source. You can start a remote debugger from within the assembler to single-step and generally poke around in your code when it blows up; you can load multiple source files into separate windows within the editor and switch between

them with a single keystroke; the editor keeps track of where you are within each source window. All this is just too convenient for words. Most usefully for me at the moment, the remote machine can be either an ST or an Amiga, which means I can develop for the Amiga without having to buy loads of memory and a hard drive for my Ami; all the programming is done on my nice familiar and comfortable Mega4 and hard drive. I'm just now using the system to convert Photon Storm onto the Amiga.

Speaking of the Amiga, after getting on intimate terms with the Ami's hardware, I have to admit that I can see why Amifreaks are so into it. It can do a lot of nice stuff once you kick the OS in the head, the sound chip's very nice and the screen handling is very flexible. Hardware sprites and a blitter as well... I could get to like it quite a lot. Mind you there are drawbacks; like AmigaDos and the horrible jitter on interlace mode; I don't think I'll be abandoning my ST in favour of the Amiga just yet!

The Lynx is still going strong; 18 million is my best on 'Gates of Zendocon', beat that... Recently, though, I was surprised to see the Lynx being upstaged by a mere Nintendo Game Boy. I was staying at my parents' place when I went down to Tadley for my brother's wedding, and afterwards we were sitting around playing video games - there was a good choice, an ST, a PC-Engine, the Lynx and the Game Boy. I would have expected everyone to be freaked out on the Lynx, but the game which was most popular was Tetris on the Game Boy. Even my mum and my eldest brother (who never plays video games) spent hours clutching the Game Boy stacking bricks. Which just goes to prove that, contrary to what most people think, graphics and sound are relatively unimportant if you have a sufficiently good game design. Extravagant graphics and whizzo sonics are all well and groovy, but often such embellishments are just used to serve up yet-another-scroller in a commercially-acceptable form. Now, if someone could come up with a game which was as original and addictive as Tetris, but which had a quality of graphics and sound like those in Amiga 'Shadow of the Beast', surely that would be a Good Thing...

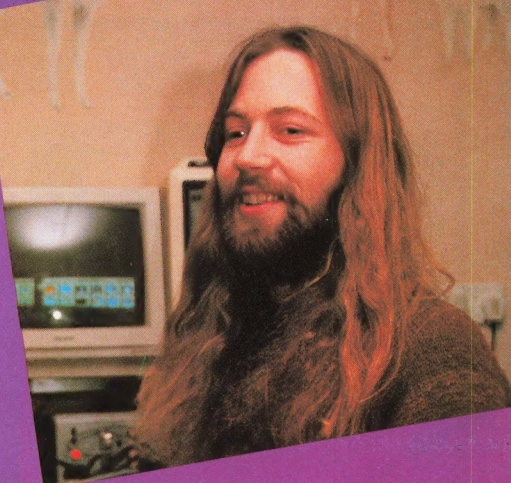
I also got approached by a software house who were interested in doing some kind of distribution deal for future Llamasoft games. It was run by a

couple of young guys, nice enough dudes, but it seemed that all they were interested in were games in a certain style with particular themes. 'Medieval adventures, futuristic space stuff, or 3D vectors' was all they were interested in. When I talked to them some more, it seemed that all they did was to read the trade press, find out what was currently in the charts and doing well, and release games as similar as possible to take advantage of the trend. They had a 'Dungeon Master' clone, a 'Defender of the Crown' clone, the inevitable vertically scrolling shooters... even these were going, they said they thought the shoot-em-up had no future!

I must admit I'm not really that keen on striking a deal with these people if all they do is copy the latest trends. They didn't seem to be very interested at all in anything original or outside of established safe formulas, and they'd never even heard of Trip-A-Tron. Their sole concern was to shift a lot of boxes and therefore make a pile of dosh. I've long believed that this kind of mentality is behind most of the large software houses, but to have my suspicions confirmed by talking to the bosses of such an outfit is still unsettling, not to mention disappointing. If they all think that way, what hope is there of anything original getting a decent chance? And even if you do, by some miracle, bring something original effectively to market and it's successful, they'll all be busy ripping off your idea and producing a bunch of clones.

Bleach.

Well, I'm off. The sheep are bleating and I've run out of sheep food, bread, bog roll, tea bags and Camels. Something must be done. And remember, 18 million on Gates of Zendocon to beat.



YaK

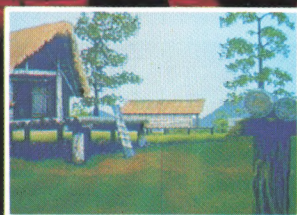
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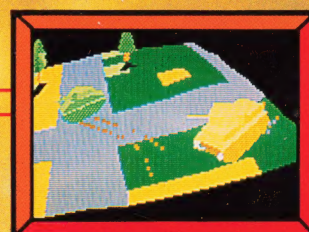
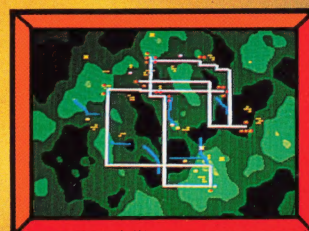
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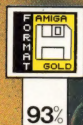
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